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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Spring on the North Downs is the subject of a refreshing letter contributed by Mr. Benjamin Kidd to last week's *Spectator*. "To-day the spring air is pleasant and warm in the sheltered combs. The early violets, and even occasional primroses, shine with unusual colour in the sunny spaces beneath the bare, wind-swept hedgerows where the dark uncropped sloe-bushes are already breaking into white. Down in the valley below, where the tall trees rise round the farm buildings, the elms seem transfigured. In the distance they look as if a purple light had fallen upon them: it is the flushing of the myriad buds already swelling as the soft spring air draws the life-giving sap upwards into the branches and the smallest twigs. The long clean pastures slope away on every side, rolling now upwards in rounded shoulders, dipping now away into deep combs where the long shadows of the early year still rest upon the land."

THE annual meetings of the Midland Christian Union and of the North and East Lancashire Unitarian Mission have been held this week. We hope next week to publish the sermon, preached at the meeting in Birmingham by the Rev. Stopford A. Brooke, together with reports of the meetings.

BEFORE leaving New York in January to enter upon his new duties as Secretary of the American Unitarian Association, the

Rev. Samuel A. Eliot was entertained at a farewell meeting by the Unitarian Club of New York. In the course of his speech, in reply to very cordial addresses, Mr. Eliot spoke of three things that he should unhesitatingly urge upon Unitarians: (i.) Deeper courage of conviction; (ii.) Construction; (iii.) Consecration. Speaking of this last he said:—"We have gained the victory of the broad church. We have vindicated the fact that religion needs no fences, no imprisoning of creeds, no undue excitements, no hothouse of stimulation. We have proved that the capacity of association for the worship of God and the service of man does not depend upon uniformity of opinion. We have yet to prove that a broad church can be a deep church, a church of the spirit searching the deep things of God. Breadth is not everything. The broad church is sometimes woefully thin. As a shallow river bears no rich commerce for the benefit of man, so a shallow faith has no freightage for our spiritual needs. If we are to serve the world, our faith must go deep—deep as sacred duty, deep as the soul's profoundest experiences, deep as the mind's most imaginative adventures, deep as the breaking heart. . . . Do we not sometimes call ourselves liberal when we are only indolent, and imagine that we are spiritual when we are only vague? Do we not need a more strenuous consecration? If we are to build up to levels of our opportunity, must we not first build down to firm foundation on the sense of obligation?"

THE *New Unity* for February 24 which comes to us from Chicago, has on its cover a portrait of the late Miss Frances Willard, and opens with the following quotation from that devoted worker:—

"A quickened sense of what our life is for is coming to the people; the common joy is coming to be comprehended as a part of the joy of the Lord, which is our strength; the common mind begins to see that matter and spirit are but different sides of the same shield, and is rising to the concept that between the secular and sacred there is no line of demarcation, but that the universe is one, its forces are one, its throbbing, ever-present energy is one, and 'all we are brethren.' The life that now is, engrosses human thought more than it has since the happy days of that Greek art which concentrates the joyous gaze of all mankind. One world at a time is insisted on, and not without reason, because if rightly used it proves to be to human souls the gate to greater worlds beyond."

In a letter in the *Athenæum*, March 12, Prof. Rhys gives Mr. F. C. Conybeare's

opinion that certain inscriptions on ancient crosses in Glamorganshire take us straight back to "The Shepherd" of Hermas, in which the Son of God is equated with the Holy Spirit. They run in the form: In the name of the Father and of the Son the Spirit. This, says Mr. Conybeare, exactly embodies the heresy of which Basil deplored the prevalence in the eastern regions of Asia Minor. He adds that the survival of such formulæ on these old Welsh crosses explains why Bede rejected the Baptism of British Christians, and why Aldhelm (A.D. 715) denied that they had the *Catholicæ fidei regula* at all. Further on Prof. Rhys says that no inscription occurring in Wales is explicitly Trinitarian.

THE *March Bookman* contains an interesting account, with a portrait, of Dr. Richard Garnett, the Keeper of Printed Books in the British Museum. Since he was sixteen years of age Dr. Garnett has been connected with the Library, and for some years was superintendent of the Reading Room. It is seventeen years since he began to superintend the printing of the catalogue, which, it is expected, will be completed next year, or in the following year at latest. There are nearly two million books in the Library, and about a hundred thousand printed items of all descriptions are added yearly. The old catalogue consists of nearly 3,000 manuscript volumes; of the new printed catalogue, when completed, there will be about 600 volumes. The Reading Room has 458 seats, and since the electric light was introduced and the Museum has been opened in the evening, it has not been so over-crowded as formerly. Dr. Garnett is not only a keeper but a lover of books, and is himself the author of poems, biographies of Milton, Emerson, and Carlyle, and other works.

In a note on the Jubilee Celebration of the discovery of gold in California, the *Pacific Unitarian*, having referred to the enormous advance in wealth and material comfort, and also of knowledge, that has marked the past fifty years, goes on to ask some further questions:—"But how of our lives? Are men nobler, more kindly and just? Are our affections purer, our imaginations loftier, our consciences more tender and true? Are we working out of our lower powers into our higher? These are the great questions. No progress changes the relations of right and wrong, and the piling of material comforts and the accumulation of knowledge that is not wrought into our lives to their upbuilding and uplifting is of no real value. Man is a moral being, and his chief concern is with the spiritual. There



is a star in the heavens called religion. We have not sailed past it. We cannot sail past it. Clouds of conceit may hide it from us. We may shut our eyes and not see it, but there it is, and sooner or later the supreme truth will set us free from the little half-truths that now weigh upon us so heavily. It is the spiritual, and not the material, that is eternal."

THE Berlin Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals issues an annual illustrated Calendar, for a penny, which contains also stories and notes of various kinds, to give information and to waken sympathy with animal life. The "Calendar" for the present year contains a charming little story by Meta Beringer, the late wife of the editor and manager of the society. She died last autumn of cancer in the throat, and shortly before her death, when speaking had become difficult, wrote a touching message to her friends and "to all good people," begging them to carry on the work of her life, and especially to see to it that tenderness and pity for animals are awakened and nourished in children through teaching in the schools. She and her husband have established a fund to which the savings of their lifetime are given, and which has been already increased by other gifts to £5,000, the interest of which is to be devoted to the encouragement of such teaching, and to the publishing of helpful literature, such as the "Calendar."

OUR readers may have noticed the renewed advertisement of the volume of sermons by the late Rev. T. P. Broadbent, of Cheltenham, with a prefatory note by the Rev. J. Estlin Carpenter. The volume was originally printed for private circulation among his personal friends, at the time of Mr. Broadbent's early death, but the remaining copies are now advertised by Messrs. Williams and Norgate for sale, as it is felt that the book may be valued by a wider circle. There is in the sermons a refreshing simplicity and directness of religious utterance, and the volume would be found a welcome addition to Postal Mission libraries, to be sent out to those readers who ask for helpful religious reading.

A REMARKABLE career was ended on Thursday week by the sudden death at Bristol of Mr. George Müller, in his ninety-third year. A Prussian by birth, Mr. Müller came as a young man to this country, in the first instance as an agent of the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews. In 1832 he settled as an Evangelical preacher in Bristol, having already taken up that attitude of faith in regard to supplies both for his personal needs and his work, which was afterwards exemplified in so striking a manner in connection with the great Ashley Down Orphanages. From a humble beginning in 1836, these orphanages grew to such proportions that altogether 122,000 children have passed through the schools, and 10,000 through the orphan homes. Mr. Müller gloried in the fact that he had never asked directly for any money, though between a million and a million and a half had been given for his work. He announced his needs, and firmly believed that all gifts came in direct answer to his prayers. He was a man of undoubted piety and great benevolence. In his later years he made great

missionary journeys round the whole world, as an Evangelical preacher.

THE week's obituary also includes the following:—Sir Richard Quain, Bart., an eminent physician and editor of the "Dictionary of Medicine."—Miss Janet Harrison, journalist, managing proprietress of the *Marglebone Mercury*.—Sir Henry Bessemer, inventor of the process of steel making, which bears his name.—The Rev. Henry Bonner, formerly assistant to the Rev. Samuel Cox, at Nottingham, and for fifteen years minister of the Hamstead-road Baptist Church, Handsworth, Birmingham, a man of beautiful nature, and a true minister of religion.—Sir William Fraser, K.C.B., a distinguished Scottish antiquary.—Mr. Aubrey Beardsley, artist.

BRISTOL: LEWIN'S MEAD DOMESTIC MISSION.

THE annual sermons in aid of this, the oldest but one of our Domestic Missions in England, were preached on Sunday, March 13, the specially invited preacher being the Rev. H. Enfield Dowson, B.A., of Gee Cross, who appealed for the institution in the morning at Oakfield-road Church, and in the evening at Lewin's Mead Meeting, the alternate services at each place being undertaken by the Rev. C. D. Badland, M.A.

The pecuniary response in answer to the preacher's natural and persuasive eloquence was most satisfactory, the contributions at the several services together realising an advance of £7 upon the amount so given in the preceding year.

The annual business meeting of the subscribers took place on the following evening in the commodious and bright new mission hall in Lower Montague-street. The chair, in the regretted absence of the president of the Mission, Mr. Arthur H. Wansey, through illness, was filled by Mr. Philip John Worsley, J.P.

Before commencing the business awaiting transaction the CHAIRMAN expressed, on behalf of those assembled, and in sympathetic and appropriate terms, the kindest condolence with the thousands in Bristol and elsewhere who were even then grieving over the loss of their pastor, so widely esteemed and revered—the late Mr. George Müller. Mr. Worsley alluded to him as a man of the most remarkable character, a man who, in their eyes, seemed to walk in the presence of God, a man who had a simplicity of faith that had carried him through miracles. The death of such a man was of no ordinary account, and they would offer their heartfelt sympathy to the people who had had the inexpressible loss of such a man, of such a pastor.

The Rev. A. N. BLATCHFORD then submitted the Committee's annual report, in which they said that the hope expressed last year for the future and increased progress of the Mission's usefulness had been thoroughly borne out during the past year. Through the personal influence of their trusted missionary minister, the Rev. J. Wain, the institution was a felt power for good in the neighbourhood. The Committee emphasised the satisfaction felt at a survey of the last year. For the faithful and self-denying band of workers who gathered around the missionary, the Committee felt they could claim the warm and very grateful acknowledgments of

the subscribers. It was expected that the expense of new and of restored premises being once overcome, the Mission would enter upon a course of quiet and steady progress. Such had proved the case, and the clubs and classes now pursue their work amid the surroundings of comfort and of convenience. The report demanded the grateful tribute of all to the long, the wise, and the constant support which it received from so old and so devoted a helper as the late Mr. Wm. Butcher.

The Rev. J. WAIN then presented his report, which in careful detail set forth not only the helpful and successful labours of the missionary, and those friends who laboured with him, both within and without the Mission, but reflected also with the utmost frankness the drawbacks and the difficulties with which the most tactful care and the most commendable patience for a time may struggle in vain. The report, too, bore ample evidence of the spiritual good derived from the well-sustained and devout assembly for worship in the Mission Chapel every Sunday night. The statement read reflected the warmest gratitude for progress in the past and the reasonable prospect of steadily increasing work and usefulness in the immediate locality where our Mission has become a very real influence in the direction of a purer and better life.

Mr. J. KENRICK CHAMPION, the treasurer, read his annual statement, which showed that the income, including an opening balance of £7 6s. 10d., amounted to £218 12s. 4d., and the balance remaining in hand was £19 1s. 2d. The reports and statement of accounts were adopted with applause, on the motion of the CHAIRMAN, and thanks were accorded the workers.

The Rev. H. ENFIELD DOWSON, B.A., in response to a cordial and enthusiastic expression of the thanks of the friends of the Mission for his appeals from the pulpit on the previous day, expressed the delight it afforded him to renew old friendships in the neighbourhood of Bristol, to appeal for such a holy work as that carried on by such an agency as a Domestic Mission, and described it as the most real work that man could do amongst his fellow-men. In a speech full of interest he laid before the meeting his first experiences on the field of religious and philanthropic work, under the guidance of his revered friend Mr. C. L. Corkran in the East-end of London, and rejoiced to find such efforts, identical both in spirit and in kind, being made by those who had mission work so truly at heart in Bristol.

A recognition of the faithful services of the Rev. J. Wain, who was congratulated heartily on his restoration to his wonted health, followed by the election of the Committee and officers for the coming year, completed the business of one of the most successful and hopeful gatherings which the friends of the Mission have ever experienced; and the proceedings closed with a hearty and unanimous vote of thanks to the Chairman for his acceptable services that night.

BOYS' BRIGADES.—With a view to united action and mutual help, Mr. J. W. Cooper, 28, Osborne-road, Southsea, would be glad to hear from secretaries of any Unitarian Bands of Hope or societies which may have formed Boys' Brigades or Drill Companies.

"THE IMITATION OF CHRIST."

"Do not inquire," says the author of the *Imitation*, "who spoke this or that, but mark what is spoken." He cannot, therefore, have greatly desired for the sake of his readers that they should know who wrote the book; much less would he have cared to claim the authorship as a matter of personal reputation, forgetting the rule which he laid down for others, "Love to be unknown and to be held in no account." Yet, by a strange fate, the origin of the book has been debated all over Europe with passionate zeal for more than two centuries and a half. Great, and to some extent useless, learning has been expended on the controversy. Religious orders have engaged in the strife, and have carried it on in the temper of partisans. Even patriotic fervour has prompted men to take one side or the other. Ecclesiastical and secular courts have been asked to intervene, and Protestant scholars have been interested in the question as to the authorship of a book, which, whatever the author's age and country may have been, was in any case the work of one who was a priest and a monk. Strange that all this long, and sometimes angry, controversy should have arisen just because he who is the subject of it cared little or nothing for the point at issue.

But, after all, it is natural that those who love the book should desire to know what manner of man he was who still speaks peace to the soul with a voice which sounds through the ages. Happily, it seems as if the cloud of controversial dust had been blown away, so that we can see at last the man who wrote, with the time and the home in which he lived. Of course, it is impossible within the space at command even to sketch the history of the battle between the critics. We may, however, be able to give the reader who has no acquaintance with the subject some idea of the reasons which commend the view now universally, or all but universally, accepted by competent scholars—viz., that the *Imitation* was written by Thomas Haemercken, called *à Kempis* from the place of his birth—Kempen, in the diocese of Cologne. Modern criticism has simply restored the belief which was at first undisputed, and always remained the most popular. Only, learned inquiry has set the ancient and popular theory on a foundation of evidence which seems irrefragable. Many other names have been suggested for the author of the *Imitation*. Of these, however, two only ever obtained any considerable support—the one that of the great French Chancellor, Gerson, who played so great a part in the ecclesiastical strife of the fifteenth century; the other that of Gersen, said to have been an Italian Benedictine abbot, who flourished about 1230, though in reality nothing is known of him, and his very existence has been called in question. The following are some of the reasons which are, as I think, decisive for Thomas à Kempis:—

First, it is for him, and for him alone, that we have the express evidence of contemporaries, notably that of Busch, who lived near the monastery in which Thomas spent his long life, and who knew him well. He, writing some years before Thomas died, says:—"Thomas (and the context leaves no doubt that Thomas à Kempis is intended) was the author of several devout books, in particular of that

on the 'Imitation' [beginning], 'He who followeth me,' &c. In the next place, no fewer than fifty of the earliest MSS. attest the authorship of Thomas, and there is no certain instance of any MS. prior to the last part of the sixteenth century which claims the book for anyone else. Of the ancient MSS. two, at least, are from the hand of Thomas himself. Now, obviously, the fact that Thomas copied out the *Imitation* is no proof that he wrote it; it was the business of his life to copy MSS., and we know that he wrote out a copy of the whole Latin Bible. When, however, we examine the nature and environment of the Antwerp MS., "finished and completed by the hands of Thomas" in 1441, the evidence which it affords is strong and clear. The *Imitation* is but part of the volume, the rest of it consists of works undoubtedly composed by Thomas, and the presumption is that he did not write in one volume a number of treatises which were his own, and a treatise on the *Imitation of Christ* which was not his at all. Moreover, the MS. contains corrections and improvements of the *Imitation* which could only come from the original author or from a forger wishing to pass as the original author. Turning to the autograph at Louvain we find a note added by its earliest possessor, which runs thus, "Written by the hand and in the characters of Thomas, who is the author of these devout booklets." It should be remembered, also, that MSS. of the *Imitation* prior to 1450 all come from the Netherlands or North Germany. A third and very interesting kind of proof is drawn from the Latin of the *Imitation*. Take, for example, such a phrase as "exterius scire." Evidently it means "to know by heart"; but how did the author fall into such a barbarism? No explanation can be given from the French, which was the mother-tongue of Gerson, or the Italian, which would be spoken by the shadowy Gersen. But we have only to remember that Thomas must have thought in some form of Teutonic, probably Low Teutonic, speech, and the mystery vanishes. "Exterius scire" is a literal rendering of the Low Dutch "van buiten weten," or the High Dutch "auswendig wissen." Lastly, the careful investigations of Hirsche have discovered a systematic rhythm in the *Imitation*. It is found in other undisputed works of Thomas, but there is no trace of it in the writings of Gerson.

Surely, then, we may take for granted that Thomas à Kempis wrote the *Imitation of Christ*. He was born at Kempen in 1380, he ended his long life in 1471. The time in which his lot was cast was a disastrous one for the old Church system, and, as it might almost have seemed to the men of those days, for the interests of Christianity itself. As he saw the light, the seventy years of Babylonish captivity in Avignon, which made the Popes the puppets of the French Crown, had just come to an end. As he grew into manhood the external unity of the Western Church was rent in twain—nay, almost into pieces. There were rival Popes anathematising each other, and nations ranged themselves on one side or the other according to their political inclinations. Then came the long struggle between reforming councils and Popes who would do nothing to redress abuse, and who, instead of following the high ideal of Papal power which had inspired

men like Hildebrand, valued the pretensions of the Papacy as a means of extorting money for themselves and benefices for their favourites. The clergy were often shamelessly immoral. The scholastic philosophy and theology were losing themselves in trifling subtleties and in a characteristic union of scepticism with dogmatism. France and England were in the death-grip of a deadly struggle, to be followed by the strife of France and Burgundy. Earnest souls like the Lollards and Hussites were breaking loose from Catholic belief altogether. Meanwhile the Turk thundered at the gates of Constantinople, and Thomas must have heard of its fall when he was already an old man. We might easily imagine that the spirit of truth and purity and love was leaving the Roman Church, and saying, "Let us depart hence," as from a house left desolate, as from an order made old and ready to perish. But in every age Christendom has had its chosen souls. Even in the Roman Church of that day and under the strictest forms of Roman orthodoxy there was a spiritual life beautiful and true. Its "image is not the movement on the surface of the waters, but the depths of the silent sea." Of that spiritual life the *Imitation* is the perfect example.

Thomas found an almost lifelong shelter among the Brethren of the Common Life. There was a network of communities known by that title spread all over the Low Countries and North Germany. It had been founded towards the close of the fourteenth century by the mystic Gerard Groot. Some of the communities consisted of men or women, who, without the bond of vow, lived together and gave themselves to the education of the young, the copying of MSS., and, indeed, to useful work of any kind, even to such apparently secular employment as weaving. Those who sought a stricter rule might enter the house of the Canons Regular at Windesheim, near Zwolle, which was connected with the general institute of the Brethren. This Thomas actually did when he was about nineteen years old. Ordained priest in 1414, he wrote in that year the short treatise on the Holy Eucharist which now forms the last book of the *Imitation*. His life flowed peacefully past in preaching, hearing confessions, writing books of his own and copying out the books of others, as well as in filling various offices in the order. Very pleasant is the picture of him which has come down to us from those who knew and loved him. Of his personal appearance we only learn that he was of short stature. He endeavoured to inflame the hearts of others with divine charity rather than to sharpen their wits. He kept strict guard over his tongue, but would brighten up and become very cheerful when devout persons talked of spiritual things. He would often withdraw from company, saying by way of excuse that there was one waiting for him in his cell. Sometimes he would sharply rebuke those who gossiped about their neighbour's business. There was a portrait of him with the words, which were probably his own, beneath, "In all things have I sought rest and have not found it, save in a corner with a book."

Thomas was in no sense a reformer before the Reformation. He was a devout child of the Church: his book is the most perfect flower of mediæval piety. He was in some respects the very opposite of a

reformer, for he was a mystic. He turned from the controversies about dogma to that life of union with God which he knew to be consistent with a thorough and loyal acceptance of the Church's teaching. He did not trouble himself about the history of the world without: he felt no call to attack the moral evils which were eating out the heart of the Church at large. His business was with his own soul and with the souls of his brethren and of those whom Providence had put under his care. There is, then, nothing strange in the fact that his masterpiece—the "Imitation"—is at this day the favourite manual of Catholic piety. It is constantly in the hands of the Jesuit novice: it is familiar, I suppose, to the members of all the religious orders: it is no less popular with the secular clergy and the lay folk. It has been translated into a vast number of languages. It has had a wider circulation than any book save the Bible, and its popularity has passed far beyond the confines of the Roman Church. It has appeared in many Anglican editions: it has been printed and reprinted by Scotch Protestants: it was constantly in the hands of Wesley and his disciples in the early Oxford days of the Methodist revival—nay, it has won the enthusiastic love of such men as Rousseau and Renan; and who can forget the touching tribute to its power in George Eliot's "Mill on the Floss"? Well might Dr. Johnson say, "The world has opened its arms to receive it." In a subsequent paper I shall try to point out some of the causes for its undying power over the heart of man.

W. E. ADDIS.

"AS A WEANED CHILD."

BY THE REV. ROBERT COLLYER.*

It cannot be that we shall be exempted from the wormwood; but the good Bishop Horne says, "Wormwood eaten with bread is not bitter," and so we can eat this wormwood with our bread of life. The time may come sooner or later for many of us when we have to look backward toward the old place on the hill, or nestled was it in the valley, and to say, "Oh that I might drink of the well by the gate!" and the time to remember friendships we would fain have held on to just as they were; but they die, the beloved, or are lost quite out of our life. And there are graves in which they rest whose life was so blent with ours that we said the whole worth of the years which remain went with them. Or the rude, sturdy health may be failing us a little year by year, while the task is not yet done; or the world itself may have changed for us from a palace to a sort of poor-house. The sunshine may be shorn of the old glory, and the songs of the birds of their melody. The flowers may have lost the keen edge of sweetness which comes with the crocus and the wood anemone, and gathers fragrance and colour through all the summer-time of life. So it may be long before we touch the snow-line; and yet, I say, the blessed lesson of the weaning need not wait. I remember how, many a year after I came to this New World, I did so long to drink at one well whose waters came rushing down a beryl brown from the moors, to walk through the green lanes again and down by the

river, and over the moors among the heather, to hear the lark again, and the thrush, and even to find a nest in a holly bush I knew of when I was a boy. These were among the memories I could not bury in level graves, do what I would.

Well, it was many years before I went back again, so changed that my own mother said, "Oh, my lad, I do not know thy face, but I know thy voice." And I rushed away to the well to get my drink; but this was the truth which was waiting for me there—that the sweet, cool water I had brought over in my heart and memory was the better now, and the sweeter. This was very good, just as good as ever, as I tried to believe; but the wormwood had done its work, and so I had to see that I was weaned from the well. The old lanes also were very lovely, and the bonnie brown river, which sang to me with no sad refrain,

Men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I heard the thrush also and the lark, found the nest in the holly with the pale blue eggs; and the mother-bird seemed to know me, for it was down in the home-laws that we should harry no bird's nest. It was all so pleasant and sweet, away up to the couch among the heather, and it was all true; but the truth of the well touched all things wherever I might wander. I had brought the spirit and essence of them all in my heart across the sea. Only one love had grown finer and fairer, but this lay in the human ties. These had not failed or faded. They stormed my heart with a new delight, and for the first time in my life then I volunteered to kiss a man because I could not help it. And so at last I struck this old man's noble secret of the wormwood and the weaning, and something of this may come to us all long before the snows come; and then, if we are wise to learn our lesson, comes the help and the healing.

It is suspected, you know, that we never lose anything out of our life, but only lay it away where I had laid my well and all the rest; and this, as my faith stands, must be true of the best. Memories which touch us from the earliest time, friendships dear as our life, and a love, it may be, that is dearer, losses and gains, the crosses and the crowns, the cradles and the graves,—they are all laid away, to be transformed and transfigured where mortality is swallowed up of life. We say,—

The tender grace of a day that is dead
Can never come back to me.

but that depends on what we make of the wormwood and the weaning. Whatever was good to us and good for us, whatever was blended of our true life, is clothed with a light at last which is not of the sun. It is the good story, then, my friend told me of the fine old Jew in Dresden, who, when he said to him, "Do you not long to return to Jerusalem?" answered, with a delicate motion toward his heart, "Jerusalem is here, sir." So very quiet we can be, and restful, if we will but learn the lesson of the weaned child. These things that befall us apart from our sins and shames are often as inevitable as the sweep of the planets. We think we might have warded so many of them away if we had known once what we know now; but the very difference between now and then

may be one divine element in the weaning, while nature and time, I say, and the eternal love of God, are sure to bring their blessed compensations, so that we find at last we would hardly have what we had once if that must be bought at the price of the treasure which comes to us when the things which are seen and temporal are changed into the unseen and eternal,—a friendship still unbroken when the friends, as we say, are no more, a love which has changed from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord, still more tender and heart-whole than it ever could be while they tabernacled in the flesh;—the power which comes by wormwood and the weaning, and by faith and trust to front this eternal mystery of the frustration and loss of which we can trace the springs but a little way, while we may still know that they begin where they must end, with God, as we try the measure of the old man's psalm: "Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty. Neither do I exercise myself in great matters or in things too high for me. Surely, I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned from his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child."

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

[TO PUBLISHERS.—All Books, &c., sent to THE INQUIRER will be acknowledged under this head, with name of publisher and price, if supplied. The necessities of our space, however, compel us to limit the number selected for critical notice and review.]

The Ballad of Reading Gaol. By C. 33. 2s. 6d. (Smithers.)

Toko Jiki. Edited by Saicheio Kanda. (Japanese Unitarian Mission.)

Stammering, Stuttering, &c. By W. Abbotts, M.D. 1s. (Savoy Press.)

Leaves of Grass. By Walt Whitman. 9s. (Putnam.)

The Story of the Palatines. By S. H. Cobb. 9s. (Putnam.)

Nullification and Secession in the United States. By E. P. Powell. 9s. (Putnam.)

Islands of the Southern Seas. By M. M. Shoemaker. 10s. 6d. (Putnam.)

The Old Religion in Modern Words. By a Clergyman. 12s. 6d. (Putnam.)

Social Facts and Forces. By W. Gladden. 3s. 6d. (Putnam.)

Spiritualism: A Personal Experience. 6d. (Hunt Barnard.)

The Vitality of Christian Dogmas. By A. Sabatier. 1s. 6d. (A. and C. Blackie.)

The Growth and Administration of the British Colonies. By the Rev. W. P. Greswell, M.A. 2s. 6d. (Blackie.)

The Confessions of Saint Augustine. Newly translated by C. Bigg, D.D. 2s. (Methuen.)

The Deemster. By Hall Caine. 6d. (Chatto and Windus.)

Aarbert. By W. Marshall. 5s. (Son-nenschein.)

The Speaking Voice. By Mrs. Behnke. 2s. (Curwen and Sons.)

The Spring of the Day. By Hugh Macmillan, D.D. 5s. (Isbister.)

Port-Royal Education. By Félix Cadet. 4s. 6d. (Sonnenschein.)

Workhouses and Pauperism. By L. Twining. 2s. 6d. (Methuen.)

Religion and Conscience in Ancient Egypt. By W. M. F. Petrie. 2s. 6d. (Methuen.)

Memories of a Mistaken Life. By an Octogenarian Actor. (Elliot Stock.)

Review of Reviews.

* From the "Messiah Pulpit," New York, February 11, 1898.

LITERATURE.

RECENT LITERATURE IN THE
DEPARTMENT OF CHURCH
HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.*

WE have before us a few of the books which have appeared recently in English in the department of Church History and Biography. Within the limits of a single article we cannot attempt anything in the nature of a critical estimate. We must be content to refer to them in descriptive terms, and simply to indicate some of their more salient features.

In importance and permanent value the first place must be assigned to Mr. Wilfrid Ward's "Life and Times of Cardinal Wiseman," which we have noticed already at some length in these columns. We refer to it again only to emphasise the fact that it has an historical as well as a biographical interest. The chapter on the English Papists, and the careful and detailed account of the Papal aggression and the growth of Catholicism in England during the present century, will be of permanent value to the student. They supply us with materials which were not easily accessible, and at the same time serve to correct some over-coloured statements in regard to the importance of the Oxford movement to the Catholic Revival. There were other forces at work. Pius the Ninth was in the background, Wiseman was a Catholic by birth and an Ultramontane through long training at Rome, and Manning, who after the Rubicon was crossed, counted for more than Newman in ecclesiastical influence, was not one of the Tractarians. Mr. Ward in this admirable historical survey throws fresh light upon a great contemporary religious movement. He does not conceal his own sympathies and convictions, but he writes as an historian with clearness and candour and distinct literary power.

Canon Overton's book appears in two volumes in the "National Churches" series. It is called "the Church in England." We should have been better pleased if he had used the title "the Church of England." The latter would have made clear the point of view from which he writes, and the limitations of sympathy and interest which he has imposed upon himself. In his preface he tells us that he has written from the point of view of nationality. The intimate relation between the life of the Church and the life of the nation is to be the distinctive note of his work. Our hope rises that at last we are to have a history of the religion of the English people in all the rich variety of its life. But, alas! we soon find ourselves within the familiar ecclesiastical walls. This is simply another of the fairly numerous histories of the Anglican Church, without, it is true, some

of the too familiar sneers at Puritanism, and pervaded by a more tolerant spirit than is unhappily always the case; but, for the history of English Christianity, which we need so much, we have still to wait. Within these limits Canon Overton's book may be found useful, though it is hardly careful and minute enough for a text-book, and it lacks the brilliant qualities of Mr. Wakeman's "Introduction." His references to authorities are meagre and very haphazard; to find passages from Erasmus, for instance, quoted in the notes without the slightest indication of their source is not worthy of the scholarship of even a popular history. We imagine that our author, who is so much at home in the eighteenth century, feels himself somewhat strange in dealing with the Renaissance, or we should hardly have had the statement that, for practical purposes, 1453 may be taken as the date of the general movement (I., p. 325), or the naive confession that Leo X. did not escape the infection of scepticism (I., p. 327). There is, moreover, a too evident dislike of foreign reformers, and a desire to minimise the importance of the distinctly Protestant influences in the English Reformation.

The "Life of John Donne" is included among the English Leaders of Religion, and we think it suffers on that account. Firstly, because Donne's religiousness was only one side of his nature: his poems are part of him no less than his sermons. And, secondly, unrivalled as were his powers as a preacher, he can hardly be looked upon as a leader. A leader presupposes a following, a party, and an influence which extends itself in widening circles beyond the limits of the individual life. Now Donne has no claim to be considered as a leader in the sense in which Wesley and Newman were leaders. But he is a very fascinating figure, and we think it a pity that Dr. Jessopp has not given us either a complete study of the man with all the perplexing contradictions of his character, or a smaller study of Donne the preacher. Both would be very well worth doing, but the present "Life" is neither one nor the other. Perhaps this is the reason why Dr. Jessopp's unfailing charm seems for once to have deserted him. What we miss especially, over and above the absence of reference to Donne's poetry and the purely literary importance of his activity, is any adequate account of the psychology of his conversion. How was it that the gay young man about Court and the writer of amorous verse was transformed into the author of the "Devotions," and the preacher pleading with the vast crowd at Paul's Cross to believe that "Blessedness itself is God Himself. Our blessedness is our possession, our union with God. To see God as He is, that is blessedness"? We feel that Dr. Jessopp has not made it sufficiently clear to us by what Damascus road Donne travelled. We must indulge in one other small grumble. In his preface he informs us that he has made use of new facts, but that no authorities are cited because "the generality of readers would rather be without them." Perhaps he is indulging in a little quiet sarcasm at the expense of his publisher, but we are sorry to see such easy compliance on Dr. Jessopp's part. We have every reason to rely upon his accuracy, but if his principle, that in "literature, as in the

ordinary affairs of life, we must be content to trust one another," were carried out strictly over the whole field it would sound the knell of accurate scholarship and original research. We have read this life of Donne with genuine pleasure, and our only disappointment is that in such hands it might have been even better than it is.

Two volumes in the "Foreign Statesmen" series must not be overlooked. The great politicians of the sixteenth century were concerned so intimately with ecclesiastical affairs that anything which throws fresh light upon their activity has its relation to Church history. This is certainly true of Philip II. and William the Silent. Of these two excellent biographies, while Mr. Frederic Harrison had the more attractive subject, we must give the first place, both for interest and intrinsic historical importance, to Major Hume's monograph on Philip II. It is an able piece of work, which reveals original research both in Spanish history and the intricate ecclesiastical diplomacy of the period. Major Hume gives a picture of Philip's character which is both consistent and intelligible; and he is careful to vindicate him from responsibility for the Marian persecutions, one of the mistaken beliefs which still finds much acceptance with ordinary readers of history. The Spanish king did what he could to restrain the outburst of persecuting zeal, not, of course, from any objection to persecution in itself, but because at the time it was bad policy for the Catholics. There is in his life something essentially tragic, both in the limitations of his powers and the vastness of his disappointments. He tried to crush the modern world at the moment of its birth, and he failed. "He inherited," says Major Hume, "the championship of obscurantism, as he inherited the task which obscurantism was powerless to perform. Burdened thus, as he was, with an inherited work for which neither he, nor his inherited means, was adequate, it was only natural that he should adopt the strange views of the semi-divinity of himself and his mission that so deeply coloured most of the acts of his life. The descendant and the ancestor of a line of religious mystics, he looked upon himself as only an exalted instrument of a higher power. Philip of Austria could not be defeated, because Philip of Austria was not fighting. It was God's battle, not his; and he might well be calm in the face of reverses that would have broken another man's heart; for he knew, as he often said, that in the long run the Almighty would fight for His own hand, and that defeat to Him was impossible. Where his reasoning was weak was in the assumption that the cause of the Almighty and the interests of Philip of Austria were necessarily identical." The only fault we have to find with this admirable book is that it has no index. We wonder whether this, like Dr. Jessopp's missing authorities, is also a concession to "the generality of readers"!

We may add in a postscript that a further instalment (Vol. V., in two parts) of Mrs. Hamilton's well-executed translation of Gregorovius, "Geschichte der Stadt Rom im Mittelalter," has recently appeared. It comprises the period from the election of Innocent III. in 1198 to that of Clement V. in 1305.

W. H. DRUMMOND,

* 1. "The Life and Times of Cardinal Wiseman." By Wilfrid Ward. 2 vols. Longmans. 24s.

2. "History of the Church in England." By Canon Overton. 2 vols. (National Churches series.) Gardner, Darton, and Co. 12s.

3. "Life of John Donne." By Augustus Jessopp, D.D. (English Leaders of Religion.) Methuen. 3s. 6d.

4. "William the Silent." By Frederic Harrison. (Foreign Statesmen series.) "Philip II. of Spain." By Martin A. S. Hume (Foreign Statesmen series.) Macmillan. 3s. 6d.

DICKENS REVISITED.*

"I HAVE heard it very truly remarked that, in our day, people for the most part criticise Dickens from a recollection of their reading in childhood . . . in general, they never read him at all after childish years." It is possible that many who are not tempted to read Dickens will be willing to read about him in this well-written study, and if no hunger for the half-forgotten pages is thereby kindled, the fault will lie neither in Mr. Gissing nor in Dickens himself.

Mr. Gissing's book is very pleasant to read. Its wealth of allusion is much in its favour; all kinds of delightful folk, from the Wellers to Mr. Crisparkle, press and jostle each other in its pages. Again, it is an attempt, perhaps the first, "to regard Dickens from the standpoint of posterity," and is carried out in a spirit of high seriousness, worthy of such an emprise. Perhaps the greatest interest of all arises out of what might seem to be Mr. Gissing's shortcomings for the task he so bravely assails: his modernity, his coldness, his essential detachment from the whole bouncing, full-blooded, brandy-drinking Dickens world. The result is a strange little drama, played altogether behind the scenes, in which the reader is first cast for the part of blind Dickens-worshipper, with Mr. Gissing as *advocatus diaboli*; and then, in the second act, all is reversed, and we find Mr. Gissing defending his author from the reader's cheap and ill-considered attacks.

The critic begins in such a tone as one of the minor deities in Jove's *régime*—say, Priapus—might have used about Saturn. He is tingling with literary self-consciousness; he feels that, being a novelist, he is an artist or nothing; moreover his art has well-accepted principles and rules; if Dickens was spontaneous, unconscious of art, violent in disregard of laws now considered absolute—well, allowance must be made for his primitive age. We find "nowadays" contrasted with those former years, all to the advantage of nowadays. "So great a change has come over the theory and practice of fiction in the England of our own times that we must needs treat of Dickens as, in many respects, antiquated." As the work proceeds of judging the great novelist by canons invented since his time, we catch now and then a little cry of surprise at the discovery how well he managed without them. Then the question of his artistic honesty is formally raised, and it is conceded that "whatever our judgment as to the result, his zeal and energy were those of the born artist."

All of a sudden our guide catches his breath with amazement: he has stumbled upon "George Silverman's Explanation," which, "were the author unknown, would be attributed to some strenuous follower of our 'realistic' school." It is plain that Dickens could do the "nowadays" kind of thing when he wanted; what a pity that his invincible optimism stood in his light, and interfered with that "uncompromising bitterness" and "consistent gloom" which stand out here so admirably! "Never a smile to lighten the impression; no interference with the

rigour of destiny." Why, after finding the true, the modern way, would Dickens persist in interfering with the rigour of destiny, and smiling, to lighten the impression? Well, the chief interest of the book lies in watching Charles Dickens convert George Gissing to a half, a three-quarter, an all but entire belief in the legitimacy of smiles, of a destiny somewhat softened, of omission and emphasis according to a pictorial intention already formed, of what is here called "idealism." Observe the joy, as of a new idea, with which the pupil of Flaubert enunciates what most plain men have imagined to be a common-place of literary art: "Is not the fact in itself very remarkable, that by dint (it seems) of omitting those very features which in life most strongly impress us, an artist in fiction can produce something which we applaud as an inimitable portrait? That for disgust he can give us delight, and yet leave us glorying in his verisimilitude?" This is *à propos* of Mrs. Gamp. "Those features which in life most strongly impress us" are the elements of offence, which the realist school is so especially careful to reproduce. Could a conversion be more complete, or more frankly avowed? Indeed, it is the candour, the chivalrous sincerity of our critic which makes this process possible and renders it delightful.

In spite of his conversion to idealism, Mr. Gissing cannot quite forgive Dickens his decency. From the point of view, perhaps not of the artist, but of the moralist, it is almost beyond estimation—the blessing that this man's pages are all clean. Think of Zola penetrating wherever Dickens has been read, and received with the same gusto as Dickens!

Not very much is said about his religious views, but that little is of special interest to ourselves. "I exhort my dear children"—thus runs a passage at the close of Dickens' will—"humbly to try to guide themselves by the teaching of the New Testament in its broad spirit, and to put no faith in any man's narrow construction of its letter here and there." It is the essence of his religion; and his religion (oddly as it may sound) had a great deal to do with the tone and teaching of his literary work. We are told that, for a few years, he attended a Unitarian place of worship; but this involved no dogmatic heresy; at all events, no mental travail on religious subjects. His disdain for "mere formularies and subtleties" will engage our sympathy. Let me close this note upon a thoroughly good piece of work by quoting another sentence concerning the religion of Charles Dickens. "He was the last man to drag sacred names and associations into his books on trivial pretexts, but whenever he alludes to Christian precept or makes mention of the Teacher himself, it is with a simple reverence very beautiful and touching—words which came from his own heart, and go straight to that of his reader." E. W. LUMMIS.

EXTRACT FROM A LECTURE ON "FOODS AND THEIR VALUES," BY DR. ANDREW WILSON, F.R.S.E., &c.—"If any motives—first, of due regard for health, and, second, of getting full food-value for money expended—can be said to weigh with us in choosing our food, then I say that Cocoa (Epps') being the most nutritious) should be made to replace tea and coffee without hesitation. Cocoa is a food; tea and coffee are not foods. This is the whole science of the matter in a nutshell, and he who runs may read the obvious moral of the story."

CORRESPONDENCE.

[The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents. LETTERS CANNOT BE INSERTED WITHOUT THE WRITER'S NAME; and all private information should be accompanied by the name and address of the sender.]

SIGNOR CAVALLOTTI.

SIR,—Your readers will, perhaps, be interested in the following lines of mine, which appeared, of course in Italian, in the last issue of our Milanese weekly, *Dio e Popolo*.

Was Cavallotti a Unitarian? Such he was believed, at least in England, from some expressions of his, full of enthusiastic love for the most divine of the children of God—Jesus, the holy victim of the hatred of the High Priest and the Scribes and Pharisees of his time. Those expressions, when published in Milan, I hastened to translate into English, and were reported in the two Unitarian London papers—*THE INQUIRER* and *The Christian Life*.

And now, why was not the cross allowed to remain on the hearse of Felice Cavallotti? Well said of him the honourable Mussi, who spoke first of all at Cavallotti's funeral obsequies in Rome:—

"Cavallotti," he said "taken off in the vigour of full manhood from the political strife whereof he was an indefatigable leader, was possessed of the highest gifts which can adorn the heart and mind of the privileged to be the pride and glory of mankind. There was in him the gentle as well as powerful genius of the poet, the exquisite grace of the artist, the sagacity and learning of the erudite, an unconquerable perseverance in labour, a civil and military courage bordering on temerity, the brave resoluteness of the soldier, blended together with angelic tenderness of soul, transforming the hero of the battles fought for the unity and independence of our country into the mild and patient comforter and nurse of the dying of cholera in Naples and Palermo."

If to such humane and nobly generous feeling be added the enthusiastic love and admiration which Cavallotti has professed for Christ, why, I say, why was not the cross permitted to remain on his bier?

The cross, without accompanying priests! For the good priests whom he loved, if in high dignity and power, like the late Cardinal Sanfelice, Archbishop of Naples, are dead in Italy, not without suspicion of having been poisoned by the Jesuits; or, if still living, whether powerful or not, like the good priest Bernardi, are at most suffered by the domineering Vatican Jesuitism to pray at Cavallotti's funeral bedside, but not to join the immense crowd that followed his mortal remains both in Rome—the political capital—and in Milan—the moral capital of Italy.

And after this solemn evidence of the true religious sentiment of the Italians, is not the first article of the Italian Magna Charta, saying that *Popery is the religion of Italy*, is it not proven to be a lie, or at least, to use more Parliamentary language, a mere legal fiction?

Ferdinando Bracciforti.

Milan, February 13.

BATTLE.

SIR,—The repairs to the old Unitarian Chapel at Battle are now completed, and

* "Charles Dickens: a Critical Study." By George Gissing. Blackie and Son, Price 2s. 6d.

it is proposed to reopen it as Mountjoy Hall or a village institute for the town. This will by no means preclude its being used for Unitarian religious services on Sunday. The Hon. Thomas Brassey has kindly consented to preside on Wednesday, March 30, at 7 o'clock, and it is hoped that members of the neighbouring chapels will make an effort to be present. There will be tea for all visitors from 6 to 7 o'clock. There are several lodgings to be had in Battle, and convenient trains to and from London and Hastings.

M. LUCY TAGART.

Manor Lodge, Hampstead, N.W.
March 16.

"TWO OPPOSING TENDENCIES."

SIR,—May I say, as a lay member of one of our Free Churches, that I think Mr. Fripp might now be satisfied with the almost too liberal space which he has claimed in your journal in which to express his protest.

From my intercourse with members of our churches, I do not think there is such sensitiveness as he appears to imagine with regard to the name "Unitarian."

I think the general opinion is that it is necessary for us to unite all our forces to strengthen the position of our churches, knowing, as we do, that by whatever name we may, for convenience, be designated, we stand for open trusts without any dogmatic tests.

It will be time enough to spend our zeal in vigorous protests, such as Mr. Fripp's, when we find any of our churches declaring in their *Trust Deeds* a dogmatic test of membership. At present I think Mr. Fripp is fighting a shadow.

JOHN JONES.

Prestwich, March 15.

OBITUARY.

MR. EDWARD TERTIUS WHITFIELD.

WE regret to record the death of Mr. Whitfield, of 178, Strand, well known to our readers as in former years publisher and part proprietor of THE INQUIRER. Mr. Whitfield was son of the late Rev. Edward Whitfield, of Ilminster. Upwards of sixty years ago he was apprenticed to Mr. Forrest, the well-known bookseller in Market-street, Manchester. After completing his apprenticeship he established himself as a bookseller in 178, Strand, chiefly in connection with Unitarian publications. He succeeded Mr. Tweedie as publisher of THE INQUIRER, and in 1863 was connected in the proprietorship with Mr. Robinson of the *Daily News*, and Mr. Marshall, then the Editor of this paper. On Mr. Robinson's retirement Mr. Whitfield's share was purchased, in 1876, by Mr. Bartram, who shared with Mr. Marshall the proprietorship until THE INQUIRER Company was formed in 1885. Mr. Whitfield continued to publish the paper until it was transferred to the Sunday School Association. Mr. Whitfield soon afterwards retired from the bookselling business, and became the head of the East Strand Post Office on the same premises. Our late friend was a man of retiring and modest character, and, although undemonstrative, was warmly attached to the religious faith in which he had been brought up. He was married late in life; his wife predeceased him several years ago, and left no family.

THE CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

"And as ye go, preach."—Matt. x. 7.

WHEN I was a little boy in petticoats I used to preach. Don't laugh, please! Our sitting-room was my church. A chair was my pulpit. My younger brother, and the cat, and all the things in the room, and sometimes father and mother, were the congregation. As for my sermons—well, I've quite forgotten those; I'm sure my brother doesn't remember them; and, even if it were living, it would be no use now to ask the cat!

Nay, you need not smile; for you used to preach too. O yes you did! Perhaps not just in the same way that I did. Still, I say, you preached. Every boy and girl preaches, in one way or another. You may be preaching at this very moment. I daresay you have preached many times even in one day.

Now, let me explain. What does this word "preach" mean? It comes from a Latin word *predicare*, which means to tell, to announce, to make known. And, as you see, we can announce or make things known in more ways than one. Does not the number on your own door tell something. Does not the name on a street announce what street it is? Do not the words and the marks on a sign-post in a country lane tell you the way? You know by the signal at a railway station when the train is due, and you know by the whistle when it is off! And these are only a few of the many ways you can think of which, without a single word being spoken, tell, or announce, or make known something. All I want to show you, at this point, is that it is not by spoken words alone that things are made known. Sermon, it is true, comes from a Latin word *sermo*, which means *talk*; and the word sermon literally means a spoken word. But I want you to see that it is not in sermons only that we preach; for, as I said, you preach, and yet you may never do it in spoken words.

"And as ye go, preach." Who said that? If you look in the New Testament you see that it was the Great Teacher, and whom did he say it to? Yes, to some who had been his scholars or disciples, and whom he was now sending out as teachers or apostles. They were to "go" from place to place, he said; "and, as ye go"—do what? They were to make known something good. Jesus had made it known to them. What was it? Why this: that every man or boy is God's son, and that every woman or girl is God's daughter. Fancy how proud you would be if you found out that you were of royal or of noble blood! But what Jesus made known was even more exalting: it was that you and I are of royal, yea, divine, spirit. That is, we are descended from God! Could anything be finer?

Well now, to put this into words only seems poor. If Jesus had preached it only in words, people would hardly have believed him. But, you know, he behaved, and lived, and acted and bore himself, day by day, like a son of so great a King. All his spirit and his deeds therefore made known—preached—the charms of goodness and the kinship of God.

So, of course, his learners or disciples would have to do the same. Look in the chapter where Jesus is telling them what to do as they "go" or "journey," and you will see how, in more ways than by words,

they were to "preach" or make known God and goodness. By patience, by faith, by endurance, by cheerfulness, in the way they went about their work, in the way they suffered when they had to do, in the manner they lived towards men and God every day, they, in all these things, made God and goodness better known, and so added to the goodness of the world.

Yes, my boy or girl, you are a preacher, though you never get into a pulpit and never may. As you "go" you preach, that is, as you go on your way to school or work, as you play in a game, as you sit at your lessons, as you do your different duties, as you pass from place to place, you preach. Even without words you make goodness lovely and God loved. And here is a beautiful story which shows how. St. Francis of Assisi once stepped down into the cloisters of his monastery, and, laying his hand on the shoulder of a young monk, said, "Brother, let us go down into the town and preach." So they went forth, the venerable Father and the young man. And they walked along upon their way, conversing as they went. They wound their way down the principal streets, round the lowly alleys and lanes, and even to the outskirts of the town, and the village beyond, till they found themselves back at the monastery again. Then said the young monk, "Father, when shall we begin to preach?" And the Father looked kindly down upon his son and said, "My child, we have been preaching; we were preaching while we were walking. We have been seen—looked at; our behaviour has been remarked, and so we have delivered a morning sermon. Ah! my son, it is of no use that we walk anywhere to preach, unless we preach as we walk."

J. J. WRIGHT.

TO A SNOWBIRD.

DEAR little bird with bright black eye,
If you but knew my eyes were kind,
How swift the pretty form would fly
Our shining porch-berries to find.

DEAR little bird with fluttering heart,
If you but felt my heart was true,
That fairy figure soon would dart,
To sheltering hand held out for you.

DEAR little bird with glancing wing,
Did you but know I long to fly.
Perhaps you'd sit quite near and sing
To me in my captivity.

DEAR human heart, be not afraid,
Thy need of food, thy dream of flight,
He knows, by whom the worlds were made.
To speed thee on is His delight.

—Frances E. Willard.

WEST OF IRELAND DISTRESS FUND.—The Rev. C. J. Street acknowledges with thanks the receipt of the following donations, which have been added to the above fund:—A Friend, £1; Miss Mary Martineau, £2 2s.; Miss Smith, £1; Mrs. F. A. Whitehead, £2 2s.; Mrs. Schultz, £1 1s.; A Poor Woman's Mite, 1s.; Miss Dibb, 2s. 6d.; Miss Norris, 10s.; Mrs. Harris, £1 1s.; Miss M. E. Wolfenden, £1; Mr. J. Troup, £5; Miss S. J. Gregg, £1. The following subscriptions from INQUIRER readers have also been sent direct:—The Rev. Dr. Drummond, £10; Miss Mary Fretwell, £1; Mr. Thomas Reed, 5s. The total sum received in answer to Mr. Street's appeal is £160 4s. 6d.

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LONDON, MARCH 19, 1898.

THE MINISTRY OF A FREE CHURCH.

WHEN we speak of a Free Church we mean a gathering of those who unite in the freedom of the spirit to acknowledge God, to worship Him, and to seek to be led in His way. And by the ministry of such a church we mean not simply the spoken word, or the service that one trusted leader may render, but the service and the testimony of the whole company of those who are thus gathered together in the one spirit. The very act of forming a Church is a confession of God, not the profession of a doctrine, but personal surrender to Him who is the Source of all life and truth. And loyalty to spiritual freedom in the church is a further confession that the God whom we thus acknowledge is not One who in a distant age made a final revelation that has now simply to be reported and accepted and made to serve all our needs, but that He is the living God, the eternal and ever-present Spirit, in whom we have our being, who speaks to us in all truth, and also in the undying hope of yet more perfect vision of His truth. His revelation is the continuous unfolding of our spiritual life, one with the life of old, quickened wonderfully by what it has been in the loftiest spirits of our race, and yet a life which must find its divinest moment now in communion with the Eternal, in fellowship with those who are a light upon our way, and in trust of what the future shall reveal.

In our Free Churches we are committed to this life with God. This is the testimony we have to bear: that there is such a life, and that it can be lived by simple and straightforward people in the world as it is to-day. And

in this must we not confess that we are at one with Jesus, and stand in the line of his disciples? It is part of our testimony, in face of an orthodoxy which sets up a false standard of acceptance with God, and limits His all-embracing love and power, to dispel those shadows of terror and despair which are cast over sensitive and humble hearts, and to make it clear that simple trust in the heavenly FATHER and an earnest brotherhood are the sum and substance of Christianity itself, and that Jesus is to be believed when he says that the two great commandments are that we shall love God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves. It is a great and solemn trust that we accept in the fellowship of our Free Churches—a trust not to be lightly undertaken, nor lightly disregarded. It must be a great joy to those who feel that they are called to so high a service. It is a satisfaction of our own deepest needs, and, at the same time, the best ministry to the needs of others. As we drink at the Fountain we show to others where the living waters flow.

What must never be forgotten is that it is the whole church that ministers. Every member of the one body has his own part, which only he can fulfil. It is the common life with God, the union of trust and reverence and worship, the one spirit kindled and glowing in many hearts, that satisfies and touches, and wakens the new life in others. Where there is a whole people gathered into the true spirit of worship the presence of God is manifested, as it cannot be by any spoken word. The lonely and sorrowful, the weak and tempted, are folded in the same care: peace and comfort, new strength and gladness, are ministered where there is the sorest need, and wanderers are drawn to seek and find their help from the one Giver of all good.

Thus the supreme question always is of life, more life with God. We are only too familiar with discussions as to the position of our churches, their influence in the world, their organisation, their name, the methods of their worship, and their work. Too often we are wearied and disappointed, the discussion seems so barren and the tone unworthy, because there is so little token of remembrance of Him with whom in all such matters we ought to be supremely concerned. For a happier issue it must be far more deeply felt that it is for God, and in His strength, that we are united; that all discussion must be in the light of His presence and His purpose; that He must be the Maker and Builder of the church. There is no other binding and inspiring force that is sufficient, and the church is ours, and we are its builders only as we are given up to Him, and become, not in idle theory but in fact, channels of His grace, instruments of His holy will. The one greatest need, the one deliverance from all unworthiness of

spirit, from all ignoble troubles, is to remember God and what He asks of us. Where there is the true inward life with God there is the creative power which makes the church, and wisdom to order its affairs aright. Then there is no thought of self, no anxiety as to what the world may think; there is an earnest reverence and humility, strenuous and joyful devotion to the work, and a genuine love of fellow-workers. Then, whatever discussion may arise, there is no enmity or jealousy, no bitterness even in the heat of argument, no clever and sarcastic ridicule of another's views. Bent on the highest service, there is the worthiest temper, a breath of purest life, and the world cannot long remain insensible to its commanding and redeeming power.

We are apt to be discouraged because we belong to a small body—to a despised or unpopular sect. The secret of deliverance is to forget ourselves and to remember to what service we are called. The church does not belong to itself, but to God and His service. There can be no littleness in that surrender. And if a church has grown self-conscious and over-sensitive to what the world may say, that is a sure sign that it is forgetting its high calling. And so of every minister of religion we may say that he has no right to belong to a sect. He belongs not even to himself, but to God. Amid the inevitable divisions of the world his place may be with the despised or disliked and suspected. That is not his concern, but rather that he shall hold his place in truth and honour, bearing witness to a deeper unity of spirit, enjoying a loftier fellowship, and showing that he also is a single-hearted worker for the highest ends of God. A true minister may be poor and neglected, but he has the grace of God, and that is more than all else.

When, therefore, we desire that our churches may be stronger and more progressive, with more united and effectual power for good, we must bear this in mind: that it can come only from greater power of ministry in ourselves, as a united people—and that can come only from the inward life with God. Amid the many things we have to do we may not be forgetful of Him, but with more perfect self-surrender must be given to His service.

Faithfulness in every human relation is essential, and much would be done to strengthen our position if we were more true to our ideal of brotherhood. But to this end is given us the vision of the Divine Kingdom on earth. With God, in God, we find our best strength and wisdom to deal with every social need, the most enduring spirit of brotherhood, the surest inspiration for self-sacrifice, and love that is unwearied in well-doing. To such service the church is called, to draw men together, to be nurtured in the true life with God, and then to send them out into the world, ministers of His truth and goodness.

THE PULPIT.

PRESBYTERIAN FOUNDERS AND UNITARIAN HEIRS.*

"The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers: that He may incline our hearts unto Him, to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments."—1 Kings viii. 57, 58.

THE question has been lately raised anew, and this time within our own household, "Whether dogmatic Unitarianism has any right to free Presbyterian chapels?" Nor ought we to be impatient with those who have forced us to reconsider it, or rebuke them as of disloyalty to the body to which they belong; for either we are confident of our title, and ready to give account of it, whenever challenged—or if not confident, surely anxious, then, as religious men to establish it on firm and true grounds, and failing so to do, prepared to abandon our holdings at whatever cost. For our object in constituting ourselves a Church, whence arises the need of a settled place of meeting, is not to gain anything for ourselves, or secure a party triumph over neighbours otherwise minded to ourselves: our object, avowed in hymn and prayer whensoever we meet together, is to forward the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, to encourage and help one another for the more faithful service of God and man. Impossible, then, were it that we could begin by establishing ourselves on other men's property, and pray for the reign of righteousness and peace in the place we had wrongfully obtained, and which we keep only by the force of law.

And indeed the situation is well deserving of attention were it only as a religious phenomenon, an wholly unlooked-for result of very exceptional and accidental conditions. Of 280 churches in England which are known as Unitarian, whether they themselves own to the name or not, at least 150 date from before the time when Unitarianism was professed or even tolerated; while of the remainder the greater number were founded by these elder congregations, and are in many cases still dependent on them for support, so that they too share the same descent from men of alien faith. They were Trinitarians the men who bought the sites, who built the first meeting-houses which stood where chapel or church was afterwards erected, who left the greater part of the endowments which have helped or hindered our progress. Their ministers were required to sign the Thirty-Nine Articles, and if they obtained exemption as regards three or four, it was only to relieve their consciences on such matters as the episcopal government of the Church or the baptism of infants: those doctrinal Articles to which we should most object, they accepted with the greatest readiness. Nor is it, I think, open to reasonable doubt that could they have foreseen what would be the trend of unfettered opinion in religion, and how their descendants would, in the exercise of the liberty bequeathed to them, set aside even the fundamental Article of the final authority of Holy Scripture, they would have taken precautions to secure their property from being perverted to the maintenance of

what they condemned as flagrant and soul-destroying heresy.

By what right, then, do we inherit of men who certainly would not knowingly have made us their heirs?

By Act of Parliament, we may answer in the first instance, and the answer would be a good one, and quite sufficient; for the Dissenters' Chapels Act of 1844 was passed by a majority of 120 in the Commons, and 161 in the Lords, only after long and full discussion; and we may be assured, without further inquiry, that the three estates of the realm did not give so hearty assent to the measure on behalf of one of the smallest of the Dissenting bodies, unless for the reason that they were convinced, with Mr. Gladstone, that it was "a Bill absolutely incumbent upon the House to pass, in order to adapt the law of the land to the principles of equity and justice;" and he went on to say that "having examined the whole subject with the most scrupulous anxiety, he could not admit that it is subject to the smallest doubt whether Unitarians ought to be regarded as qualified successors of the early Presbyterians in their chapels."*

This opinion, endorsed as it was by the legislature of the day, should be sufficient whether to answer Trinitarian claimants to our property, if there were any—and I have never heard of such—or to quiet scrupulous consciences among ourselves. We cannot be forever scrutinising our title-deeds; doubts might have been reasonable sixty years ago, they are no longer tolerable.

But waiving the authority of Parliament and to make assurance doubly sure, we might answer—secondly, that we hold by the same right, whatever that may be, by which the Established Church holds its immense properties, left, as they were for the greater part, by men who would have looked upon the Thirty-Nine Articles as heretical, who were loyal to the Pope as Vicar of Christ and supreme head of the Church on earth, and whose motive was generally the honouring of some now neglected saint, thereby securing both his intercession in heaven, and the offering of masses for the souls of themselves and their kindred on earth. The faith of pious founders has been reformed out of their recognition, and the conditions of their bequests set aside as superstitious; but the property has not been restored to their representatives; the masses have ceased for centuries, but the money left for them has not been given to those who still believe in their efficacy, and still would offer them. And it may well be doubted whether the average vicar of to-day is not as far removed in opinion from his mediæval predecessor as our ministers are from the Presbyterian founders of the chapels in which they minister.

But after all it is not a question of more or less difference, or longer or shorter lapse of time; the fundamental question concerns the right of the living as against the dead—a right which every generation assumes to itself, the denial of which would bring about stagnation of thought, relieved only by confusion of title. For the possessors of the world are the men who live in it, not those who did live a century or ten centuries ago, any more than those who will live here in time to come. Were the men of the past

allowed to rise in judgment, and try their descendants by the test of conformity to their opinions, there would be decrees of universal ejectionment following one upon another, till from barrow and burying-place worshippers of Odin and Thor rose up to reclaim the sites, dedicated originally to the war gods of our race and alienated long ago to the service of the gentle Christ.

The rule that undisturbed possession for a number of years gives a secure title is moral as well as legal. If men or nations were to go back to the origin of their possessions, not estates only but empires would be broken up, and while present owners abandoned them, rightful and capable claimants for them could not be found. So we need have no scruple in admitting that those who originally founded this chapel would not approve of our ownership, while we assert that that ownership is in accordance with both law and justice.

But have we no other claim beside this? Must we be content to say, "We have come into this property by neither force nor fraud, we have held it for a century or more, and Parliament has confirmed our title," and rest satisfied with what were, indeed, an ample answer to all objectors? Have we no spiritual kinship with our Presbyterian founders? no sympathy which justifies our claiming them as not only predecessors but forefathers? Must we count ourselves strangers to them in religion as assuredly we are strange in doctrine?

I read that in 1699 there was no Dissenting congregation in England which would admit a Socinian to communion. To accept such a one for its ministry would have been impossible from the point of view of the congregation and contrary to the law of the land. But men far in advance of the Socinian position now minister from the old pulpits to those who occupy the old pews, or the seats which have replaced them, and all are agreed to profess what their predecessors would not tolerate even in an exceptional case. Intellectually we are descendants of those whom our predecessors cut off from their communion. In what sense, then, can we claim fellowship with these same predecessors? How can we be heirs at once of Presbyterian and Socinian, of communicants and the excommunicated?

The difficulty, though more manifest in our case, is neither new nor exceptional. The present is born of the past, and debtor to it for all it has; the men and women of to-day are the children begotten of yesterday; we have nothing which we have not received. It is only now and again, when the spirit of revolt takes possession of us and compels us to realise that we are, after all, ourselves, and must think and act and legislate for ourselves, and follow our forefathers in asserting our independence of them as they did of those who had gone before them—it is only at such epochs of political or religious revolution that we are apt to deny the past, and turn and rend those whose fault was to be born before we were. "If we had lived in the days of our fathers," we say, as the Jews of Christ's time did, we shouldn't have thought and done as they did. But such reasonings are mere foolishness, and the saner mind of quieter times knows them for what they are, and turns back to the past with reverence and love, and seeks not in vain to discover a

* A sermon preached on the occasion of the Bicentenary of Dob-lane Chapel, Manchester, by Charles Hargrove, M.A.

* "Debates on the Dissenters' Chapels Bill," pp. 165-186.

unity of truth underlying all variations of opinion.

St. Paul had to meet the difficulty and in a very acute form. How were Gentile converts to Christianity to be brought into the Jewish fellowship? was the question as it presented itself to him. For to the Jew belonged all the privileges of the Kingdom of Heaven; his were the Scriptures, to him were the promises made, of his line came the Christ, it was the children of Abraham who were to be partakers of Abraham's blessing. Heretofore the Gentile proselyte had been made a Jew, and bound to the Jewish law, nor was even then admitted to full privileges; but Paul had set aside and denounced circumcision, and declared the law to be henceforth of none effect, so that his converts could claim neither by descent nor by adoption. They seemed outside the covenant of Israel, to have no lot with the chosen people of God. Paul was bold to make short work with the difficulty; "true descent," he said, "is neither by blood nor by title-deeds; it is spiritual; those who share Abraham's faith are Abraham's children." And if one should reply that the faith of these converts to Jesus, as the Messiah foretold by the prophets, was very different from the faith of one who lived before ever the prophets had spoken, he makes light of the objection. Faith, he would reply, is to be judged, not by its object, but by its substance. The faith of Abraham did not consist in his believing this or that proposition about God; but he "believed God;" that was the sum and substance of his merit; it was that which "was accounted to him for righteousness." So, too, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews gives numerous examples of faith in men and women whose religion was very different from that of those to whom he wrote, but he is careful to explain at the outset the principle upon which he associates all, from Enoch to his own day, in one society—one "cloud of witnesses," to use his own figure—it is that these all held in common the fundamental belief that "God is, and that He is the rewarder of them that seek Him." Belief in a Supreme power, who wills right and is not indifferent to us, this was the faith which united Abel and Noah, Abraham and Moses, Joshua and Gideon, Rahab and Jephtha, prophets and conquerors, martyrs and exiles, all the worthies mythical and historical of Hebrew writ, into one company with the believers in Christ of his own day. All, Paul elsewhere declares, are in one line of descent; they "are blessed with faithful Abraham;" the true Church is the Church of the Spirit; all whom the Spirit possesses and inspires are one, no matter what the difference of time or race, opinions or forms, which separates them.

The same principle applies to our own case. We look upon the religious story of the English people, and if we should set up our Unitarian convictions of to-day as the standard of true religion, we shall discover only a succession of follies, superstitions, and errors. We shall find none with whom we can sympathise; it is only a question of more or less in the degree of reprobation or pity or contempt with which we must treat those who all deviate so far from the rule of reason and faith which we have set up to try them by. But such an attitude of mind as this revolts

all but the most ignorant and conceited of us. It cannot be that we—

The latest seed of Time,
New men, that in the flying of a wheel
Cry down the past, that only we, that prate
Of rights and wrongs, have loved the people
well,

or known the distinction of the reasonable and the absurd, the credible and the impossible. Human nature is the same in us as it was in our ancestors; our brains are not of more wonderful structure, nor is our judgment superior to theirs, nor our memory, perhaps, as retentive and capacious. Our single advantage over them is to have come after them. They knew less than we do because we have inherited all the accumulations of knowledge from their time to our own; but they were at least as good, as wise, as religious, as sensible as are any of us. To be indifferent to our ancestry is to cut ourselves off from humanity, and to abdicate our right to all the rich inheritance of the past. To scorn our ancestors, or, what is the same thing, to scorn their opinions and beliefs, is to despise human nature itself, whose natural products all these are. Yet so we must do if we make the mistake they themselves too often made, and try the rest of mankind by the rule of right and truth which commends itself to us.

The true Church is not of our time any more than it is confined to our sect. If place can be found in it only for "children of Abraham," then as Paul saw, all who are in it are thereby children of Abraham. If the differences between one age and another, or even between different parties in the same age, amount to irreconcilable contradiction, the conclusion we are forced to is no more doing violence to facts than was Paul's conclusion—it is, that these differences are not of the substance of faith; that they are accidents which colour and shape it variously; for the gold is the same, though the coin be of the first century or the nineteenth, though it be stamped now with the Papal arms, now with the head of a Protestant Queen, Defender of the Faith, and the substance of all true religion, the genuine gold in all its alloys, is the sense of worship and trust in presence of the Supreme. All else is our feeble way of realising to ourselves what such a One must be and do—all ways of ours, doubtless more or less wrong; all, helpful and necessary according to our temperament of mind and stage of development.

And when we do get down to this common ground on which all true worshippers meet, however much they desire to keep apart, then we discern after the example set us in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that Mediæval Catholic, Protestant Reformer, High Churchman and Puritan, Congregationalist and Presbyterian, Quaker and Baptist, Trinitarian and Unitarian, are all "children of Abraham," as Paul would have put it, inasmuch as all share Abraham's faith.

They are members of one English Church of which Becket and Cranmer and Laud, George Herbert and Milton, Baxter and Jeremy Taylor, John Bunyan and Priestley, are the saints and martyrs. Sectarian divisions are of our own making; we can't help them, for they come of the weakness and jealousy and ignorance which is inseparable from a nature yet in course of development, and far from having attained the full growth to which

it is destined. But though these divide us, and will continue to divide us, on earth, they are only superficial; the common ground of faith is below them all; the common sky of God's love and light overarches them all. We are one Church, all who believe, for our belief, not our doctrine, unites us. The only outsiders are those who *deny*—deny not our assertions about God, but the supreme claims of righteousness, goodness, charity, which are the manifestation of the Divine Spirit in human nature, the Word of God made flesh that we should hear and see and handle it.

And now we return to the question with which we set out. If by "dogmatic Unitarianism" is meant the contention that we, Unitarians of to-day, possess the true and only genuine revelation of God, so that men are in error just so far as they assert more or believe less than we do—then, we still have a moral and legal right to chapels which we have not come into possession of by violence or fraud, but have inherited by gradual development of doctrine. But in this case we should call ourselves owners rather than heirs, successors, and not descendants, of the old Presbyterians. We have no spiritual kinship with those who went before us; our part is to expose the errors into which they fell, and endeavour to recall corrupt Churches to the unity of the true faith in our communion.

But if the name Unitarian be taken in its usual sense, as it is understood generally amongst ourselves, and beginning to be understood by outsiders—if a Unitarian be a man who, while holding to a few great principles, looks always forward for the further light and leading of God's Spirit—if, as a Calvinist Bishop in Hungary said to a distinguished representative of Manchester Unitarianism many years ago, "A Unitarian is a man who hasn't said his last word"—nay, even if we are dogmatic Unitarians in the sense in which Cudworth calls Cicero "a dogmatic and hearty theist"—if we deserve the name of "dogmatist" only in that sense Dr. Johnson assigns to it, that we are "bold to advance the principles in which we believe"—then am I bold to assert that whatever they might say who have gone before, or whatever any of ourselves may pretend to-day, we are not merely in possession of estates to which there are no rival claimants—we are the rightful inheritors of chapels which have, as a fact, been ever free from any other bond than those which the law of the land imposed. We hold of our Presbyterian forefathers in the spirit in which they held; we are their children, not by confession of the same dogmas, but by worship of the same God; and from generation to generation while creeds alter and organisations fail, and forms lose their value, the prayer remains the same and fails not, but only gains with lapse of time fuller and clearer meaning—the prayer which I have taken for text, but not preached on, for that it stands in need of no explanation, nor can gain by comment: "The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers: that He may incline our hearts unto Him, to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments."

We live by admiration, hope and love,
And even as these are well and wisely fixed,
In dignity of being we ascend.

-- Wordsworth.

MANCHESTER DISTRICT ASSOCIATION.

THE annual meeting of the Manchester District Association of Presbyterian and Unitarian Churches was held on Friday, March 11, in the Memorial Hall, Albert-square. Mr. GEORGE H. LEIGH (president) occupied the chair. The record of the past year's work was described as one of unusual interest, not because of the initiation of any new effort, but mainly on account of the unprecedented success which had crowned the scheme for obtaining the sinews of war. "Good, steady, lasting work has been done all round," said the report, "and although all our churches are not equally prosperous, still there is prophetic life within them, and they are faithfully endeavouring to discharge the duties that fall to them." The Bazaar Fund's Special Committee recommended that out of the fund provided by the bazaar last autumn a sum of £2,500 should be set aside for the purposes of acquiring land and erecting a new church at Bradford. They also recommended that a grant of £1,500 be made in aid of the fund for building at Chorlton-cum-Hardy, and £1,100 towards the building scheme at Heaton Moor, and that the Association should, as soon as practicable, secure a suitable site for a church at Urmston at a cost not exceeding £300, and erect thereon a suitable building at a cost not exceeding £1,400. Small grants were recommended for other churches. The Committee concluded as follows:—"The amounts recommended for allocation reach the sum of £7,250, and as the present total proceeds of the Bazaar Association Fund amount to £9,247 10s. 3d. net, your Committee recommend 'that the remainder of the money, and any further sums to be received, be reserved for the purposes of providing for the future expenses of the Association at Bradford and elsewhere.'" "In conclusion," the General Committee added, "we may say that we have had a busy and anxious year. We are grateful for all the effort made on behalf of the work we have in hand, but we would impress upon the members of our churches that, although this glorious success enables us to proceed at once with our building scheme and to meet the needs of the present moment, it does not relieve us of future responsibility, but rather increases it. The more successful we are in our Forward Movement enterprise the greater will be the demand upon our resources, and we therefore rely upon the loyal and continued and enthusiastic support of our friends and well-wishers who sincerely think our gospel is worth preaching, and that all means and effort spent in spreading it abroad are well spent. The task becomes possible of achievement when supporters are loyal and moved by real religious enthusiasm."

The CHAIRMAN, in moving the adoption of the report and accounts, referred to the unprecedented success of the bazaar, and how much of that success was due to Mr. J. R. Beard, who was prevented from being present at their meeting. In connection with that effort our churches had all been brought together in work for a common object, and it had done them much good. Suitable buildings would soon be erected at the Forward Movement centres, and assistance has been given to some other churches which had special schemes of work in hand. In a great

centre like Manchester there is unlimited scope for Christian work, and we can find plenty to do without interfering with the work of others. Our movement is not one of antagonism against the other churches. There is enough work for us all to do, and it is inspiring to think it is waiting to be done. We must strengthen our position as much as possible, and adopt improved methods, when we discover them, without prejudice.

Mr. E. C. HARDING seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

Mr. NAGARKAR, who was heartily welcomed, said it was an unmixed pleasure and a rare privilege for him to appear in that meeting. Long time past he had been repeatedly told by his English and American friends that the Manchester district and its surroundings were the stronghold of liberal Christian thought. He would have preferred to be the last of the speakers, because he was there to hear more than to speak. He was there for the purpose of giving them a greeting on behalf of the Brahma Somaj, of which Indian movement he was a humble exponent. The East and the West were the two poles of human thought, as they were of this physical world. The East from time immemorial had been the land of rapt communion, of intense devotion, of ecstatic feelings, whereas, on the other hand, the West had been the home of great activities, especially of the secular kind, but Western nations had developed, under the providence of God, a strong spirit of active, practical piety, philanthropic industry, and a strong sense of co-operation and organisation. The time had come when the East and the West had met together—as they had a right to meet, for his hearers would remember that they, descendants of the Anglo-Saxon race, representatives of Great Britain, were the direct descendants of the same Aryan forefathers, of whom the modern-day Hindoos were the legitimate children. So that the modern-day Hindoo of Hindostan and his English brethren and sisters were cousin brethren and cousin sisters, and it was a marvellous circumstance—it was nothing short of a miracle—in this latter half of the nineteenth century, that in the midst of the active West, as also in the midst of the contemplative East, the same spiritual aspirations, the same religious ideals, the same fervent prayers were being sent out. They, few and humble, of the Brahma Somaj of India, held the same banner of liberal thought, of a wider universal fellowship, with the Unitarians of this country, more in numbers, stronger in worldly and financial circumstances. There had been a most sympathetic, cordial touch of friendship between representatives of the Brahma Somaj and the English Unitarians, and it grew stronger as years passed by. The Brahma Somaj was deeply grateful for all these tokens of cordiality and fellowship, and he desired to indicate a few lines along which they believed this feeling of interchange between the East and the West, between the Brahma Somaj and English Unitarians, should extend in time to come. They of the Brahma Somaj had always held that, under the providence of God, the time had come when a legitimate place should be given in the religious life of every nation to all the Scriptures of the world. They pleaded for the recognition of the Scriptures and the prophets of all lands and all religious systems—not to

place all on one level, but to recognise and make use of the elements of good which were found in all. In the Brahma Somaj fully 90 per cent. of the members recognised the superior claims of the "sweet and simple Prophet of Galilee." With respect to the government of India, his feeling was that there was much room for improvement, much room for recasting the lines along which the work of government was being carried on, but this was not the time nor the place to enter upon that field. But, making all allowances for human organisation, for all the rampant feelings that throbbed both in Indian and English hearts, the educated natives of India had always been most loyal and loving subjects of the British Government. They would hardly find an educated individual throughout the length and breadth of the country who did not realise that marvellous blessings had come to them through the British Government. New aspirations had been engendered, new vistas of intellectual thought had been opened before their mind's eye, new ideals of political life and of scientific achievement had been opened up to them, so that the East had been once more rekindled, as it were, as a direct outcome of this impact between India and Great Britain, and, in the words of one of our great poets, William Cowper, India said, "England, with all thy faults, I love thee still."

The Rev. CHARLES HARGROVE, M.A., next addressed the meeting. In the course of his remarks he said that the churches generally have come rapidly our way; but have they come nearer to us? No. We are really more isolated; the frontier is kept more strictly between them and us. Free Church Councils exclude us. There may be advantage in this; we shall be drawn closer together as a consequence. We stand for great principles and for the unity of all religious men. It is no boast to say that the union between Hindoo and English is established between the Brahma Somaj and the English Unitarians as nowhere else. We go to India not so much to convert men to our faith as to stretch out a friendly hand to them; and to say that through our Christ we have learnt of God as Father as they have learnt through their prophets thousands of years ago. We stretch out our hand to all humanity, pleading for that great comprehensiveness, the Universal Church, founded not on a creed, but on the worship of the God and Father of us all, in the way in which He seeks our worship—in spirit and in truth.

Mr. HILLER, of Chorlton, next presented the Rev. D. Agate, on behalf of many friends in the Forward Movement Churches, with a handsome easy chair, as an expression of deep regard and esteem, and regret that he has discontinued his work amongst them.

The Rev. DENDY AGATE responded in suitable terms, and spoke of the joys and privileges of his work during the past four years; and he trusted that work in other hands would go on increasing and prospering, as, indeed, he felt sure it would.

The Rev. W. H. BURGESS, who has also done admirable work in connection with the Forward Movement Churches, also spoke; and then, after the usual votes of thanks, the proceedings terminated.

CUNNING to wisdom is as an ape to man.—William Penn.

PROVINCIAL LETTER.

WESTERN UNION.

I must ask your readers to note, first of all, that in writing of the Western Union I have to dwell not on the churches in a single county, or part of a county—such as the Manchester district, the North-East Lancashire, or the East Cheshire Association—but of *Counties*, viz., Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Somersetshire, part of Dorsetshire, Devonshire, and of work in Cornwall, where, although we have no churches, we have a very considerable number of what are at present very isolated, and scattered Postal Mission correspondents, but of whom we have great hope of forming several Unitarian circles. Our Western Union embraces 28 churches, 23 ministers, and a dozen or so lay helpers, not a very great or startling show, perhaps, but compared with the Liberal Churches in other parts of England, not to be despised, and certainly with no reason for shame-facedness or despondency. And having said this much in general I do not know that I can give your readers a better idea of the state of our religious life in this district than by speaking of each, although necessarily very briefly. Beginning with our churches in Gloucestershire: our most northern outpost is that of *Cheltenham*, where our cause has suffered very greatly within the last three or four years from monetary losses, the death of that young and promising minister, the Rev. T. Parker Broadbent, and from recent troubles. Yet the friends here have done, and are doing, their very best, and with the advent of their new minister (the Rev. Fisher Jones) are looking hopefully forward to more than a retrieval of the past.

At *Gloucester*, Barton-street Chapel is still the home of a united, vigorous and liberal congregation, which is able to make its influence felt even in a Cathedral city, and where scarcely any public movement is carried on without the co-operation of the Unitarian minister, or some members of his congregation. Some four years ago extensive alterations were made in the chapel which have contributed much to the enjoyment of those who attend the services, though about half the cost still remains to be cleared. At the same time the trust property was rebuilt and improved under a scheme sanctioned by the Charity Commissioners, which, in about twenty years, will treble the value of the endowments. Gloucester evidently has a future.

At *Cirencester* we have an instance of a faithful and zealous minister (the Rev. H. Austin), who has laboured here for over thirty years, and although it is a small town, with a congregation of but humble folk, yet upon my last visit there, some two months ago, to celebrate their 249th anniversary, I spoke to a congregation, both morning and evening, in numbers and attention well worthy the best that any minister could give them. Minister and family are working earnestly, surrounded by a band of young people, many of whom are constantly leaving such a small town to better themselves in larger centres, and most of whom, it is a pleasure to find, join our churches wherever they can find one in the town of their adoption, and prove good and useful workers. Indeed, this constant loss of young folk at the call of larger towns and cities is the

source of great grief, in one sense, to numbers of our Western ministers and congregations. *Frenchay*, since the departure of Mr. Godfrey to Deal, has had to depend upon the kindly offices of a number of friends from Bristol. Coming to Wiltshire and *Trowbridge*, the active and earnest followers of good old Samuel Martin can always speak for themselves and their faith, and under the leadership of their eloquent minister, the Rev. R. H. U. Bloor, B.A., the outlook has once again, I understand, brightened, and both leader and people are well to the front in the political and civil, as well as the religious, life of the town. Of *Rushall* I know nothing more than that its one service a day is faithfully supplied by a devoted lay-worker connected with the Trowbridge congregation.

Of the two congregations at *Bristol* it is not necessary to say more than that at *Lewin's Mead*, under the valued leadership of the Rev. A. N. Blatchford, B.A., the old tradition of faithfulness to all helpfulness in civil and religious life and liberty are ably maintained by both minister and people, a ready hand of helpfulness being ever held forth to all the weaker churches, whilst their own work goes quietly and steadily forward. At *Oakfield-road* the minister has just resigned his position, and will be leaving in July. Many of his colleagues in the West will regret his departure.

At *Bath*, Trim-street Chapel is, in more senses than one, overshadowed by the fine old Abbey, whilst the Palace, at the not very distant Wells, adds to the overwhelming of all Dissent by the Anglican establishment. Of course, in such a place, with its seasons and fluctuating population, all congregations vary considerably, but, despite all this, it is no small assembly, counted by numbers or influence, that joins in worship with their steadfast and devoted minister.

At *Shepton Mallet* we have a very happy and fairly strong congregation with one of the best Sunday-schools, considering the size of the town, in our Western Union.

Bridgwater, the revival of which was undertaken after much deliberation on the part of the officers of our Union, and by the resident Unitarians, has gone quietly forward; the Sunday-school has been re-established and, although small and composed very largely of the children of those attached to the congregation, yet one was more than glad to find any young folks connected with a cause which had dwindled as this had done. The attendance at the Sunday services has steadily, though slowly, increased, and from the few worshippers of some two and a-half years ago, we have grown to a morning attendance of between thirty to forty, and an evening average of over fifty.

Taunton.—The changes so common of late years in so many of our congregations, and especially in the West, through the loss of old and wealthy families from death, and other causes, has touched with a very heavy hand the congregation meeting in the Mary-street Chapel, and yet it is no mean congregation that assembles from Sunday to Sunday in that beautiful building, and both day and Sunday-school are full of life and activity, doing much for the welfare of the town, whilst minister and people are esteemed by those of all churches and parties.

At *Yeovil* where, since the rebuilding of the chapel some five years ago, there has

been grievous disappointment and difficulty, the Rev. S. S. Brettell, M.A., is now zealously labouring, as also at Crewkerne, as assistant in charge since my removal to Bridgwater in October, 1895.

Crewkerne, which was re-opened after having been closed for some time, with great doubt and some hesitation, has, from the very first moment when I held the re-opening service the second Sunday of my work in this district, gone steadily and successfully forward. From year to year improvements have been made in the interior of the building, and it is now one of the brightest and pleasantest of our small places of worship.

At *Ilminster* we have an instance, as in the case of Bridport, which I shall mention next, of a small country town with a really strong congregation—not greatly rich, yet able and willing to do well in every way, with good congregations and fairly large Sunday-schools, giving every sign of steady life.

In Dorsetshire we have but one congregation belonging to our Western Union, that of *Bridport*, where we still have what I fear is not now often found—a small country town with a strong and healthy Unitarian congregation. Rich and poor mingling happily together, both school and congregation are full to-day of good workers, and I am deeply indebted to both old and young here who have from the very outset of my work in this district helped ably and willingly in the services at Crewkerne, Yeovil, and other places.

Devonshire.—At *Colyton* the last years of the quiet, but steady, ministry of the late Rev. J. Sutcliffe witnessed an awakening in both church and Sunday-school, which has happily gone on increasing.

Cullompton.—Our congregation here, as at Colyton, is composed of working people. Since the sudden illness and death of Mr. Lloyd Jones some three years ago, I have had the oversight of this congregation, and the services have been entirely sustained by ministers in the district and lay preachers; for the last twelve months mostly by friends from our congregation at Devonport. During this time the interior of the chapel has been entirely repainted, &c., new windows have been put in, and many other improvements made; one of the pleasing signs in connection with the recent restoration being the attendance at the re-opening services of so large a number of friends from Exeter, accompanied by the Rev. T. W. Chignell and Lady Bowring, who presided at the evening meeting. Many of the ladies of the Exeter congregation seem to have found a happy interest in helping this small and struggling, but earnest, congregation, and this leads me to say how much gratification is felt by Western friends at the interest manifested by the minister and friends at Exeter in the life of our churches. A welcome to the Assembly this year is to be given by this old and historic congregation.

At *Sidmouth* we have an assembly of rich and poor all working heartily together with their minister and greatly encouraged by the assistance which has been of late rendered them by friends in all parts of the country, who, knowing their worth and work, have been willing to aid them in the building of a room for Sunday-school and social meetings.

At *Crediton* the minister has unhappily long suffered from want of health, but has been constant in his services.

Tavistock, with its fine old abbey-chapel, its young and hard-working minister, and the brave and generous support of a new-comer among us—Major-General Jacob—bids us all take heart again, seeing how steadfast a few can be, and how they can look forward with bright faces toward the future.

At *Plymouth* we do not find so large a congregation as might have been expected, but there is a good Sunday-school, ably led by the minister, with some young and zealous workers. The Postal Mission work in connection with this congregation and that of *Devonport* is well and faithfully done; several agencies for helping the sick, &c., are in operation, and an earnest desire is shown by many in the congregation for the gathering-in of the many outside—who, alas! do not come in. At the neighbouring congregation of *Devonport* the complaint is not so much that the people do not come, but rather that they do not come to stay. The population is a shifting one, but, despite this drawback, people and pastor have done much, and are doing a much-needed work.

At *Torquay* the congregation meeting in *Unity Hall* naturally suffers from time to time by the loss of visitors, who come for a longer or shorter period for needed restoration, but on the whole the losses are more than balanced by the gains, and the local congregation is gradually being formed into a solid and compact body.

At *Moreton-Hampstead*, one of the smallest towns in our district, with many religious meeting places, our own denomination having two here, the Cross-street Chapel and the old General Baptist Meeting-house, where service is held once a quarter—we have quite our proportion of the inhabitants, and although the Sunday-school is very small in numbers, yet a recent visitor tells me that she knows of no Sunday-school where the religious instruction is so efficient. Of the work which we have just undertaken at *Newton Abbot* and of *Cornwall*, as also of our little monthly, the *Western Union Chronicle*, I must speak in another letter.

T. B. BROADRICK.

AUSTRALASIAN NOTES.

MELBOURNE, VICTORIA.—The Rev. R. H. Lambley, M.A., the newly-appointed minister of the Melbourne Unitarian Church, arrived on Monday, January 10, by the s.s. *Koenigin Luise*, and was welcomed by a number of members of the congregation assembled on the Port Melbourne pier. On the Sunday following Mr. Lambley commenced his ministry by conducting both services, and on each occasion the congregations were much larger than usual. A public welcome to Mr. and Mrs. Lambley was held in the Lecture Hall on Monday, January 24, a large attendance of members and friends being present on the occasion. The chair was occupied by Mr. H. G. Turner, and addresses of welcome were delivered by the Chairman, the Rev. Chas. Strong, D.D. (Australian Church) and Mr. A. J. Taylor (Our Father Church, Hobart, Tasmania), to which Mr. Lambley responded. Songs and recitations were given by members of the choir and congregation, and altogether a very enjoyable and profitable evening was spent. The annual picnic of the Unity Club was held on

January 1 at the Mentone Recreation Hall and grounds, and was well attended, and greatly enjoyed by all concerned. The annual meeting of the Australian Church was held on January 19, Dr. Strong presiding. The annual report and balance-sheet were presented by the Committee, and showed that the finances of the church were in a more satisfactory condition than for some years past. Dr. Strong gave a short address, in which he summarised the work accomplished by the various societies affiliated with the church, and the Hon. Alfred Deakin, M.P., and other prominent citizens also spoke.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES.

[Notices and Reports for this Department should be as brief as possible, and be sent in by Thursday Morning.]

Aberdeen.—A series of popular Sunday evening services, assisted by a grant from the McQuaker Trust, was commenced on March 6 in the Trades Hall. On the first occasion the congregation almost filled the area of the hall. The Rev. A. Webster gave an address on the question "Do you believe the Bible?" Mrs. Jamieson (a member of the church) sang "A Dream of Paradise" with fine taste, and Mr. Jas. Cassie (professional) gave a violin solo. The church choir sang an anthem. On the 13th the congregation was much larger. Mr. Webster spoke on the question "Have you found Christ?" Mrs. Cruickshank (Silver Medalist), a member of the church, sang "The Children's Home" very effectively. Miss R. T. Craigmyle (a member of the church) read Lowell's "Parable" with exquisite elocutionary power. The services are attracting large numbers of young men, and are much appreciated by all. Mr. Webster has arranged addresses on familiar questions and will publish them in pamphlet form.

Bolton.—On Sunday morning, March 13, the Rev. Stopford A. Brooke preached in Bank-street Chapel, taking for his text the words: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." In the course of his sermon Mr. Brooke urged the importance of clear convictions and fidelity to principle. Truths, he said, had many forms, and principles varied in their conceptions, but it argued weakness of will and moral unfaithfulness not to be able to choose one way or another; not to be able to have convictions well established within one, and to live for them when we had chosen them. The shifting to and fro of religious observances, political principles, moral ideas, or social convictions, was the root of unfaithfulness of character and inconstancy of mind. Faithfulness was claimed from us by God, and by struggling man who wanted our help. It was not faithfulness to be lured away into the desires of ambition, society, or the world; it was not faithfulness to be ashamed of the reproach which fell upon any truth in conflict with the desires and ideas of society; it was not faithfulness to be indifferent to the advance of the truth we held, nor to regard their faith as a loose garb which could be put on or off at pleasure.

Chester.—The last of the course of three lectures was delivered by the Rev. H. D. Roberts in the Corn Exchange, last Monday. The audience numbered one hundred, and gave an attentive and earnest hearing to "A Reasonable Religion." An hour's discussion again followed. We have been having more strangers in the chapel during the course. Over 1,000 tracts, &c., kindly supplied by the B. and F.U.A. and Mr. Spears, have been eagerly taken, and attention has been drawn to the books of the Postal Mission.

Chowbent.—On Monday evening the Rev. Stopford A. Brooke, M.A., LL.D., preached here. A very large congregation, numbering nearly 700, and including representatives of all the denominations in the district, assembled. The service throughout was of a hearty character. Mr. Brooke's text was St. Matthew v. 3: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The whole district, it is felt, has been benefited by such a service.

Dob-lane: Failsforth.—Services in connection with the celebration of the bi-centenary of the Dob-lane Chapel, Failsforth, were held on Saturday and Sunday. The land for the Dob-lane Chapel was purchased on May 24, 1698, a chapel was built about 1699, and the first trust deed was created March 30, 1706. In 1878 the chapel was demolished and a new place of worship erected on the site, the

opening taking place in 1879. The proceedings on Saturday consisted of a special commemorative service in the afternoon, conducted by the Rev. Charles Hargrove, of Leeds, the devotional part of the service being conducted by the Rev. George Knight. In the evening a public meeting was held in the schools. Mr. Alderman Rawson presided, and amongst others on the platform were the Revs. Principal Gordon, J. Freeston, C. Hargrove and G. Knight, Mr. G. H. Leigh, Mr. H. Dean, and Mr. T. F. Robinson. The chairman gave an outline of the history of the congregation from the time of the erection of the chapel in 1698. Since then they had had twenty-one ministers, one of the earliest being Henry Knight, and it was a pleasant coincidence that the present excellent and devoted minister at Dob-lane bore the same surname. Proceeding to refer to the founders and spiritual forefathers of the Dob-lane and many other congregations, the chairman said that they had a special interest in several of the 2,000 pastors and preachers who left the Church of England in consequence of the passing of the Act of Uniformity. Amongst these men were Henry Newcome (the first minister of Cross-street Chapel), Thomas Holland, of Blackley, William Leigh, of Gorton, and Nathaniel Scholes, of Newton Heath, who preached at Dob-lane before the chapel existed, and rendered great service before a permanent minister was appointed. With such an origin and history as they possessed, very interesting in many ways, what did the Dob-lane congregation stand for and represent? It represented an open trust. Presbyterians, he believed, were singular in this respect. The Baptists and Independents had not the same trust in truth that the Presbyterians had, for they had adopted certain creeds and articles which they said to their ministers were required. On the other hand, the Presbyterians refused to impose doctrinal limitations on ministers or people. It stood for confidence in truth, which had never yet done harm to its faithful follower, for freedom in every form, civil, political, and social. Ministers and people had sought to widen the bounds of liberty and to extend the rights of the masses. They had always opposed tyranny and priestcraft under every guise. They were endeavouring to cause the lessons of religion to bear on conduct—honesty, uprightness, purity, manly simplicity of thought and deed. They were seeking social improvement, increased means of rational enjoyment, chances of enjoying the beauties of nature and the charms of art. They were zealous in the cause of popular education. Their Sunday and other schools were means of mental culture—facilities for intercourse with the great minds of all ages. Supreme over all in importance, they had a free home for the worship of God, for the inculcation of devout confidence in His dealings with His children, for learning the joy of hope, for bearing the discipline of sorrow. These were very great privileges. He hoped they would very zealously maintain them. They could best prove themselves worthy sons of pious people, and best celebrate this bi-centenary by faithfully cherishing these noble traditions and transmitting to their children the same undoubted trust in the truth that had been declared in that place for the last 200 years. (Applause.) Addresses were also delivered by the Rev. Charles Hargrove, Principal Gordon, the Rev. G. Knight, Mr. G. H. Leigh, and Mr. T. F. Robinson.

Frenchay.—On Wednesday, March 9, a farewell meeting was held in the chapel at Miss Norgrove, daughter of the treasurer of the congregation, on her leaving England for the Cape. The meeting was of a devotional character, a programme of sacred music being rendered by the choir of Lewin's Mead (Frenchay is a village about three miles out of Bristol), and an address being given by the Rev. A. N. Blatchford, who dwelt upon the services Miss Norgrove had rendered to the Frenchay congregation.

Hale Chapel.—At the annual meeting of the above congregation, held in the chapel after morning service on Sunday last, the following resolution was passed unanimously:—"That this congregation protests against the Sustentation Fund being used towards the maintenance of avowedly non-Christian ministers or congregations," and also "that a copy of the above resolution be forwarded to the managers of the fund, and to the *Christian Life* and *The Inquirer*."

Hull (Appointment).—Rev. E. W. Lummis, B.A., has been appointed minister of the church at Hull.

Killinchy: co. Down.—The congregation of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church are organising a bazaar to clear off a debt of £166 on their new schoolrooms, built in 1894, and to raise a further sum of £110 to renovate the church. The congregation is composed entirely of farmers, fishermen, and labourers, and has suffered much from recent agricultural depression. An appeal is

therefore, made to the generosity of friends at a distance. The date of the bazaar has still to be fixed, but contributions of money, work, or goods will be thankfully received and acknowledged by Miss A. C. Barry, Rose Cottage, Lisbane, Comber, co. Down, the bazaar treasurer, or by Mr. R. P. M'Master, Killinchy, secretary of the congregation.

Kingswood.—On Monday last, at the Parish Meeting, our minister, the Rev. J. Hardinge Matthews, was elected Parish Councillor for the Wythall Ward of the Kings Norton Parish. He is now giving us a course of Sunday evening lectures on subjects appropriate to this season of the Christian year.

Lampeter.—On Tuesday last the remains of Mary, the beloved wife of the Rev. R. C. Jones, were interred in the burying ground of Bronziez, Lampeter, when an immense concourse of people assembled to show their respect to the memory of the departed, including members of all denominations, churches, and Non-conformists. We offer Mr. Jones and his only son our sincere sympathy in their bereavement.

Larne.—On Tuesday evening last the annual business meeting in connection with the Old Presbyterian Congregation of Larne and Kilwaughter was held in the schoolroom. After tea, the pastor, Rev. James Kennedy, called on the secretary, Mr. Samuel Magill, to read the annual report, which showed the financial affairs of the congregation to be in a satisfactory state. The committee and office-bearers were then appointed. On the motion of Rev. James Kennedy, a hearty vote of thanks to the choir, the secretary, and the treasurer was passed by acclamation, and suitably responded to by Mr. William Pinkerton, sen., and Mr. Alexander Stuart. An interesting programme was then proceeded with, and after the usual votes of thanks a pleasant and successful meeting was brought to a close by the pronouncing of the Benediction by the minister.

London.—On Wednesday evening, last week, a well-attended soiree was held at Essex Hall in connection with the Central Postal Mission and Unitarian Workers' Union. Those present were, for the most part, connected with one or more of the "Pink Parties"—the associated holiday for Unitarian workers and their friends, which have been arranged in recent summers by Miss Tagart. Invitations had been sent to residents in different parts of the country, and many letters of appreciation had been received, distance alone preventing attendance. Amongst those present were a party from Northampton, and Sir Philip Manfield also attended from the same town. Other visitors from a distance included Mr. Fred Lee (Newport, I.W.), Mrs. Suffield and Mr. O. A. Shrubsole (Reading), Miss J. Kensett (Brockham), and Miss Sedgfield (Kingston-on-Thames). In the course of the evening Miss Tagart, who was cordially applauded, made a statement as to the aims of the movement, which she trusted had served not only to promote friendship, but also to kindle enthusiasm for the common cause. After giving some interesting particulars respecting the Swiss holiday last year, she said they had realised a considerable profit, and from this it was decided to set aside a sum for future business in connection with the parties, and to devote the rest to special efforts at Framlingham, Battle, and possibly other country places. Mr. Shrubsole (Lewisham) also addressed the meeting, especially commending the diffusion of Unitarian literature by the Postal Mission. He gave instances in his own knowledge of the help afforded to persons in religious difficulty and expressed particular gratitude to *THE INQUIRER*. Miss Winifred Robinson gave two brilliant solos on the violin, and Mr. Edward Webster two capital baritone songs. The only regret of the evening was that Miss Tagart was unable to announce an excursion for the coming summer—the magnitude of the undertaking having greatly extended, and requiring a great deal of preparatory business. She hoped a "party" would be arranged for next year.

London: Essex Church.—The second series of educational lectures closed on Tuesday last, when Mr. W. H. Shrubsole, F.G.S., delivered a popular and attractive lecture on "London a Million Years Ago," illustrating his descriptions with an excellent set of original slides. The interest in the second course has been well sustained, the average attendance again exceeding a hundred. A large number of strangers attended Essex Church on Sunday morning, when Mr. Freeston's second sermon on "The Bible To-day" was given, dealing with "The Historical Bible: Its Gain from the Higher Criticism."

London: Stratford.—The fourth annual meeting of the Temperance Guild and Band of Hope was held on Monday, Feb. 28, the chair being taken by the president, the Rev. T. E. M. Edwards. The Committee's report stated that there were

fourteen adults and sixty-five juniors on the roll, making a total of seventy-nine. Meetings had been held on every Monday evening during nine months of the year, the average attendance at which was about fifty. A May festival, harvest festival, carol service, spelling bee, and other meetings of a special character had been very successfully held. The treasurer's account showed a balance in hand. An effort was being made to raise a fund for the purchase of a magic lantern, which was greatly needed. The president was re-elected, and Mrs. Noel and Miss Haylock reappointed treasurer and secretary respectively, and a committee elected.

Manchester.—At a conference of friends of the Manchester Domestic Missions, held on Tuesday, March 15, to consider how best to meet the present financial needs of the society, a number of those present promised to raise £70 in new subscriptions conditionally on the total amount of £200 (the additional income required) being promised in subscriptions before the end of the year. The treasurer of the society is R. C. Potter, Esq., Heald Grove, Rusholme, Manchester.

Newton Abbot.—The third of the course of lectures on "Unitarian Christianity" was given in the Public Rooms on Thursday week by the Rev. F. T. Reed, of Moreton, on "The True and Real Jesus."

Netherend.—The annual festival of the Christian Church Society was held here on Wednesday, March 9. After the Council Meeting, at which the Rev. E. P. Hall was unanimously elected Provost, and other business was transacted, the delegates were invited to a substantial tea, of which over fifty partook. The Rev. W. F. Turland and Mr. Betham, of M.C.O., responded to the welcome extended to the visitors by Mr. Hall. At the festival service a very able sermon by Mr. Betham (who had kindly taken, at very short notice, the place of the Rev. W. Addis, absent from ill-health), was listened to with marked attention by a congregation of about seventy. The musical part of the service was hearty and effective. There were about fifty communicants.

Oldbury.—The fortieth anniversary of the Rev. Henry McKean's ministry was very happily celebrated on Sunday and Monday week. The special services on the Sunday were conducted by Mr. McKean, and were largely attended by friends from a distance and representative men of the district, in addition to the regular congregation. On the Monday evening a meeting was held in the Free School, Mr. Alfred Burgess in the chair. Cordial tributes were paid to Mr. McKean, not only on account of his long and close connection with that congregation, but also for the part he had taken in the civic life of the town and its institutions. Replying to a resolution of congratulation and good wishes, Mr. McKean spoke of the great happiness he had found in his ministry, and the close and affectionate relations that united minister and congregation through successive generations. He had great hope that the congregation would soon outgrow their present building; this would certainly be the case if the young people were faithful to the traditions in which they had been brought up. The Chairman, on behalf of the ladies of the congregation, then presented a new gown to Mr. McKean as a remembrance of the anniversary, and stated that they were not far short of the £100 they had hoped to raise in connection with the special services.

Scotland: Paisley.—On Wednesday, March 9, in the George A. Clark Minor Hall, the Rev. A. C. Henderson, B.D., lectured to a large and appreciative audience on "The Worlds Around Us." Mr. Henderson, in a most lucid, interesting, and graphic manner described the heavenly bodies, their wonders and their beauties, his description evoking the hearty applause of the audience. The lecture was illustrated by a large number of diagrams and slides by means of an optical lantern, thrown on a screen by Mr. David Jack. A cordial vote of thanks to the lecturer was passed.

Stafford.—The second of a course of lectures on "Unitarianism" was given in the Oddfellows' Hall on Tuesday week by the Rev. L. P. Jacks, his subject being "Belief in God."

Tavistock.—A mutual improvement society has been formed in connection with the Abbey Chapel, open to members of all religious denominations. On Wednesday week a paper was read by the Rev. J. Barron on "General John Jacob of Sude," the founder of Jacobabad.

Todmorden (Appointment).—The Rev. A. W. Fox, M.A., late of Altrincham, has accepted the pulpit here.

West Bromwich.—Rev. E. W. Lummis, B.A., has resigned the pastorate of the church at West Bromwich.

WANTED, Situation as GOVERNESS in school or family. Five years' experience in Kindergarten; good drawing, music, &c. Highest references.—E. T., 10, Princess-street, Leicester.

OUR CALENDAR.

SUNDAY, MARCH 20.

It is requested that notice of any alteration in the Calendar be sent to the Publisher not later than Thursday afternoon.

Bermondsey, Fort-road, Upper Grange-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. HAROLD RYLETT.
Brixton, Unitarian Christian Church, Effra-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. J. HARWOOD, B.A.
Croydon, Free Christian Church, Wellesley-rd., West Croydon, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. J. PAGE HOPPS.
Deptford, Church-street, 11.15 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. A. J. MARCHANT.
Essex Church, The Mall, Notting-hill-gate, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. FRANK K. FREESTON. Morning, "The Bible of To-day: III.—Its Place in Theology."
Forest-gate, corner of Dunbar-road, Upton-lane, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. W. HOLMSHAW.
Hackney, New Gravel Pit Church, Chatham-place, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. J. E. STRONGE.
Hampstead, Rosslyn-hill Chapel, 11.15 A.M. and 7 P.M., Dr. BROOKE HERFORD.
Highgate Hill, Unitarian Christian Church, 11 A.M., Rev. R. SPEARS, and 7 P.M., Rev. L. JENKYN JONES.
Islington, Unity Church, Upper-street, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. G. DAWES HICKS, M.A., Ph.D.
Kentish Town, Free Christian Church, Clarence-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. T. E. M. EDWARDS.
Kilburn, Quex-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. S. FLETCHER WILLIAMS.
Lewisham, Unitarian Christian Church, High-street, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. C. POPE.
Little Portland-street Chapel, near Oxford-circus, 11.15 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. C. BOWIE.
Mansford-street Church and Mission, Bethnal Green, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. G. CADMAN.
Peckham, Avondale-road, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. G. CARTER.
Richmond Free Church, Ormond-road, 11.15 A.M., Rev. W. C. POPE, and 7 P.M., Rev. S. FARRINGTON.
Stamford-street, Blackfriars-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. FREDERIC ALLEN.
Stepney-Green, College Chapel, Mr. L. TAVENER, 11 A.M., "Isaiah," and 7 P.M., "Dr. Priestley: the Lesson of his Life."
Stoke Newington, The Green, 11.15 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. WOODING, B.A.
Wandsworth, Unitarian Christian Church, East-hill, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. G. TARRANT, B.A.
Wood Green, Unity Hall, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. Dr. MUMMERY.
Woolwich, Masonic Hall, Anglesey road, Plumstead, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M.

PROVINCIAL.

BATH, Trim-street Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. F. W. STANLEY.
BEDFORD, Library (side room), 6.30 P.M., Rev. ROWLAND HILL.
BIRMINGHAM, Church of the Messiah, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. L. P. JACKS.
BLACKPOOL, Banks-street, North Shore, 10.45 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. WM. BINNS.
BLACKPOOL, Unitarian Lay Church, Masonic Hall, Waterloo-road, South Shore, 6.30 P.M.
BOOTLE, Free Church Hall, Stanley-road, 11 A.M., Mr. WORTLEY, and 6.30 P.M., Rev. DAVID DAVIS.
BOURNEMOUTH, Unitarian Church, West-hill-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. C. C. COE.
BRIGHTON, Christ Church (Free Christian), New-road, North-st., 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Mr. HERBERT RIX.
BUXTON, Harlington-road Church, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M.
CANTERBURY, Blackfriars, 11 A.M.
DOVER, Adrian-street, near Market-square, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. S. BURROWS.
EASTBOURNE, Natural History Museum, Lismore-road, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. S. H. MELLONE, M.A., D.Sc.
GUILDFORD, Ward-street Church, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. J. A. FALLOWS, M.A.
HORSHAM, Free Christian Church, Worthing-road, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. J. J. MARTEN.
LEEDS, Mill Hill, 10.45 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. C. HARGROVE, M.A.
LIVERPOOL, Hope-street Church, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. R. A. ARMSTRONG, B.A.
LIVERPOOL, Ancient Chapel of Toxteth, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. W. J. JUPP.
LIVERPOOL, Renshaw-street Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. Dr. KLEIN. Evening, "Christian Ideals and Commercial Morality."
MANCHESTER, Sale, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. JAMES FORREST, M.A.

MANCHESTER, Strangeways, 10.30 A.M. and 6.30 P.M.
 OXFORD, Manchester College, 11.30 A.M., Rev. C. B. UPTON, B.A., B.Sc.
 PORTSMOUTH, General Baptist Chapel, St. Thomas-street, 6.45 P.M., Mr. THOMAS BOND.
 PORTSMOUTH, High-street Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.45 P.M., Mr. G. COSENS PRIOR.
 READING, Unitarian Free Church, London-road, 11.15 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. E. A. VOYSEY, B.A.
 SCARBOROUGH, Westborough, 10.45 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. E. L. H. THOMAS, B.A.
 SOUTHPORT, Portland-street Church, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. C. H. WELLBELOVED.
 TORQUAY, Unity Hall, Lower Union-street, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. PRIESTLEY PRIME.
 TUNBRIDGE WELLS, Mechanics' Institute, Dudley-road, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Mr. J. R. MACDONALD.
 WEYMOUTH, Oddfellows' Hall, Market-street, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. E. C. BENNETT.
 YORK, St. Saviourgate Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. W. BIRKS, F.R.A.S.

CAPE TOWN, Free Protestant Unitarian Church, Hout-street, 6.30 P.M., Rev. R. BALMFORTH.

SOUTH-PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY,
 SOUTH-PLACE, FINSBURY.—March 20th, at 11.15, A. PATCHETT MARTIN, "Tennyson the Man."

DEATHS.

BARKER—On March 11th, Philip Barker, of The Grove, Nantwich, in his 84th year.
 ORRETT—On March 15th, suddenly, at West View, Chester, in her 51st year, Annie, wife of William Orrett.
 HARRISON—On March 11th, at Heswall, Cheshire, in her 81st year, Ellen, widow of the late J. W. Harrison, of Liverpool, and mother of the Rev. W. Harrison, of Stalybridge.
 PLUNKET—On March 11th, 1898, at 52, Upper Lusson-street, Dublin, the Honourable Louisa Plunket, aged 90.
 WHITFIELD—On March 10th, in his 78th year, Edward Tertius Whitfield, of No. 178, Strand, W.C.

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BRITISH & FOREIGN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

The NEXT MEETING of the COUNCIL will be held at ESSEX HALL, on TUESDAY, April 26th, 1898. The President, T. GROSVENOR LEE, Esq., will take the Chair at Four P.M. Any NOTICES of MOTION by Members should reach the Office on or before April 16th.

In accordance with Rules 11 and 19, notice is hereby given that any Member of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association is entitled to Nominate one or more Members for the COUNCIL or for the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE for 1898-9. Such Nominations should be made in writing, and should reach the Office not later than *Thursday, March 31st, 1898.*

W. COPELAND BOWIE, Secretary.
Essex Hall, London, March 18th, 1898.

PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT.

STAND UNITARIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL.

ANNUAL SERMONS will be preached SUNDAY, June 26th, 1898, by the Rev. W. H. DRUMMOND, B.A., of Warrington.

Board and Residence.

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UNITARIANS MUST QUIT THIS HALL.

Pressure has been brought to bear upon the proprietors of this Hall, which I have occupied on Sunday Evenings for the last two years at a rental of £20, and I have notice to quit. I intend at once to proceed with the erection of an Iron Church similar to that now so prosperous at Walthamstow, as no other building can be had at Southend. The sum of £300 will be needed. Some forty adult persons attend the services now, and one of these has presented me with an eligible site, about three minutes' walk from High-street, and the same distance from the Beach. I am asking for nothing just now but the *promise* of help. These promises can be paid after the completion of the building to Miss EMILY SHARPE, 32, Highbury-place, London, N., who has kindly consented to be Treasurer *pro tem.* An audited account of receipts and payments will be sent to every subscriber, and the list of subscriptions will appear in the INQUIRER and *Christian Life* newspapers.

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ANNUAL ASSEMBLY.

GEORGE'S MEETING, EXETER, WEDNESDAY, March 23rd. Service at 11.30, conducted by the Rev. J. FISHER JONES. Preacher, Rev. F. K. FREESTON.

BUSINESS MEETING, 3 o'clock, the President, Rev. F. W. STANLEY, in the chair.

PUBLIC MEETING in the Chapel at 7.30 o'clock.

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BLACKFRIARS MISSION, 33, NEW CUT, S.E.

The EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING of the Subscribers and Friends of the Mission will be held, as above, on TUESDAY, the 22nd inst., at 7 P.M., A. F. PEARSON, Esq., in the Chair, to receive the Reports and Financial Statement for the past year.

PERCY PRESTON, Hon. Sec.

BATTLE.—The old Unitarian Chapel will be RE-OPENED as MOUNTJOY HALL on WEDNESDAY, March 30th. The Hon. T. BRASSEY will take the Chair at 7 P.M. Tea at 6 o'clock. No Tickets needed. All welcome.

PULPIT SUPPLY.—The Rev. W. STODDART, B.A., is at LIBERTY to take SUNDAY DUTY. Address, 30, West Bank, Stamford Hill, London, N.

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